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WEISS'S COMMENTARY
ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT
—
VOLUME THREE

A COMMENTARY
ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
ROMANS	1
I. CORINTHIANS	147
II. CORINTHIANS	277
GALATIANS	366
EPHESIANS	420
PHILIPPIANS	463
COLOSSIANS	496



WEISS'S COMMENTARY

ON THE

NEW TESTAMENT

VOL. III.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS

I Paul, a ¹servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle,

¹ Gr. *bondservant*.

As Paul is writing to the congregation in Rome, which he had neither founded nor ever visited, he introduces himself to them in his official capacity. He is a person who had dedicated his whole life to the special service of that Mediator of redemption who has appeared in
1 Jesus Christ. But this he could be not in accordance with any arbitrary choice on his part, but only because God had called him to be an Apostle. He thereby has separated him from among all those whom He had otherwise called to the service of His Son for the special purpose which he is to serve as an Apostle. But this was that message of joy that comes from God and which is called the gospel; for this he is to carry through all the lands in order to establish congregations, such as that which has been established in Rome.

separated unto the ¹gospel of God, (2) which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures, (3) concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, (4) who was ²declared to be the Son of God ³with

¹ Gr. *good tidings*: and so elsewhere. See marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

² Gr. *determined*.

³ Or, *in*.

But here this congregation had been established not only in contradistinction to the Gentiles, but also to the Jews, who had already for a long time been settled in the capital city of the world and played a prominent rôle there. For this reason the Apostle at once takes occasion here to explain the relation of this gospel to 2 these two divisions of the pre-Christian world. According to its contents it is not something foreign to Judaism. For that which forms the contents of the gospel has already been promised by the prophets of God in the holy writings, i. e. those coming from Him, 3 as these are also recognized by the Jews. For the contents of the gospel is the Son of God, who, as has already been predicted in the Old Testament (cf. e. g. 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.), is to come from the house of David according to His earthly and human descent. But of this Descendant of David, of whom the Old Testament prophets speak, it had been further determined, that He should be exalted to the sovereignty of the world on an equality with God. Only in this way is He to become in the unique sense the Son of God (cf. Ps. 4 ii. 7, 8). This, too, the gospel proclaims as fulfilled. Because He who has come from the house of David, in accordance with this determination, had been appointed to be the Son in the full sense and complete reality, since He shares in the full divine power and supremacy. This naturally could take place only because He possessed not only the natural and human essence of all those who as flesh are born of flesh, but because God's Spirit, who is characterized by divine holiness, was in

ROMANS

[I, 5-6]

power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection¹ from the dead ; *even* Jesus Christ our Lord, (5) through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience² of faith among all the³ nations, for his name's sake ; (6) among whom

¹ Or, *of the dead.* ² Or, *to the faith.* ³ Or, *Gentiles.*

Him. And this could, further, only take place in consequence of His being raised from the dead, since His earthly and human life had first to reach its close in death and He had to be awakened from this unto His heavenly life. In this way, then, Jesus, whom the gospel proclaims, has become the Christ who has been promised by the prophets and has now been exalted to be our divine Ruler and Mediator of salvation.

This appears already in the fact that through His 5 mediation Paul and all of those who together with him may have been called to be the Apostles of Jesus, have received a special grace as also the appointment to the apostolic office. But the mission of this office consisted in this, that this gospel of God, which, as had already been predicted by the prophets, seemed to be intended only for the Jews, was to be proclaimed among all the Gentiles. Accordingly the obedience of faith was also to be effected among the Gentiles, because God demanded of them also, that they shall accept the gospel with that faith which a message sent by Him can claim, and in this way the name of Jesus as the promised Saviour shall be glorified by them too. To these 6 heathens also belonged at one time the members of the congregation in Rome, who now already, since they through the preaching of the gospel, had been awakened unto faith, and been called into the congregation, had become members of Jesus Christ. But it is this fact that justifies the Apostle, who has been called to labor among the Gentiles, to turn his attention to them, because they, although converted by another, yet in their great majority belonged to those to whom his special

are ye also, called to be Jesus Christ's : (7) to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints : Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(8) First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all,

- 7 call directs him. But the greeting with which he opens his letter, he expressly directs to all the Christians in Rome, and accordingly, too, to those who had become believers from among the Jews. For they are all beloved of God, since Christ has become a Mediator of God's paternal love for them, and are also called to be saints, since through Him they have become the possession of God, who have in their baptism been consecrated and obligated to His service. He wishes them the grace of God and all the blessings that flow from this. All this comes from God, who through Christ has become our Father, but also from Jesus Christ, who has for this very purpose been exalted to be the Lord and the Mediator of salvation, that He through His work as an equal of God should transmit His redemption to us.
- 8 The Apostle begins by describing the occasion of his writing this letter to the congregation in Rome. But first he feels impelled to express his gratitude to God, to whom he is indebted for everything that causes him joy, for the fact that there is such a congregation. These thanks are given through Christ, because this congregation has been established only through His activity, and these thanks are not bestowed on account of certain individuals among them for any special prominence on their part, but are given for all of them. For that which calls forth this thanksgiving is the fact that their faith is proclaimed through all the world. Everywhere, wherever he goes, people speak of the fact that there is a congregation of believers in the metropolis of the world ; and as he ascribes so great importance to this fact as is generally done, he thanks God for it. How

ROMANS

[I, 9-11]

¹ that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. (9) For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers (10) making request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered ² by the will of God to come unto you. (11) For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you

¹ Or, *because*.

² Or, *in*

unceasingly he does this, he can call upon God to 9 witness, who must know this, not only because He is the Searcher of hearts, but because this is a part of the service of God which he renders to God in the proclamation of His Son, that has been commanded him. For this service of God does not consist only in an external activity for the gospel, but also in whatever supports him in his spiritual life for all his work, and this is the petitions and the prayers for all the congregations, as he offers these daily before God. In these his prayers, mention is also at all times made of the congregation in Rome but in such a way that he can never 10 mention them without at the same time approaching God with a request in their behalf. This he ventures to utter only as a timid wish, namely, if perchance he could some time have the joy of coming to them; something for which he had so often prayed in vain, and which he hoped would be the will of God to grant, to whom the Apostle submits in everything. His anxiety to see them was, however, not of a selfish nature. His pur- 11 pose in coming to them is only to bestow upon them, even if only to a modest degree, of the gifts of grace which the Spirit of God, that is working in him, and thereby God Himself, had intended for them, when He would lead the Apostle to Rome. For it is not the purpose of the Apostle to establish their faith or to correct any weaknesses that may be found in the life of their faith, when he makes the visit he is so anxiously desiring, but only to strengthen them together with

some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; (12) that is, that I with you may be comforted¹ in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. (13) And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit² in you also, even as¹ in the rest of the Gentiles. (14) I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. (15) So, as much as in me is, I

¹ Or, *among*.

himself. But he expressly adds, as though he were correcting himself, that he does not intend merely to give
12 when he comes to them, but also to receive. For he, too, hopes to be encouraged by this visit, since, because they have a common faith, not only his faith will necessarily strengthen theirs, but theirs also his.

18 But the Apostle does not want them to be ignorant of this, that this desire, to see them, has not been a weak feeling, for he has often reached the decision to come to them, but has always been prevented from carrying out his intention. He has already indicated in the address of his Epistle that he considers the Gentile Christians in Rome as belonging to those who have been assigned to him as a field of operation. He here makes prominent the fact that, in this intention he had always been influenced by the purpose to have
14 among them also some fruit of his labor, as he had had such among the other Gentiles. For it is not only a personal wish, but also an official duty on his part to serve all the Gentiles. If this is the state of affairs, he cannot wait until the visit, which he has so often planned and which has so often ended in a disappointment, shall give him the opportunity for effecting some fruit also
15 among them. He must write his letter to them. In this way the willingness on his part to serve also those who are in Rome by preaching the gospel finds its explanation. It is true, that up to the present time he

am ready to ¹preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.

(16) For I am not ashamed of the ²gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to

¹ Gr. *bring good tidings*. Com. ch. 10.15 f. so elsewhere. See marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

² Gr. *good tidings*: and

has been laboring chiefly among the Greeks, to whom they do not belong, and not among the highly-educated 16 classes such as they are. But even among these, too, he is not ashamed of the gospel. And in assigning a reason for this, he gives expression here already to that which is the contents of his gospel, and accordingly of this letter too, in which he is proclaiming this gospel.

For the gospel certainly is not a new doctrine, that would enter into competition with the teachings of the wisdom of this world, in order, with all the arts and oratory and rhetoric to convince people of its truth. The gospel is a power of God, which stands in need of no such means, because it purposes to effect what no wisdom of the world can achieve, namely, salvation from eternal destruction, to which deliverance it shows the way and itself leads. It is true that the gospel presupposes that it is accepted as a message of redemption coming from God, with that confident conviction of its truth which such a message can claim. But if this is done, then it also, with the power of God, works in us that which is necessary for salvation. Only here it becomes perfectly clear why the address of the epistle already began by showing that the gospel proclaims a salvation that has already been promised to the Jews from the beginning, and that is now to be preached by the Apostle to the Gentiles. For here, too, he emphasizes the fact that the achieving of what is necessary for eternal salvation, and which the gospel promises, is equally indispensable for the Jews and the Gentiles. For the former first, because the Saviour and the Redeemer, who has been promised them, and who is now

the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (17) For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, ¹ But the righteous shall live ² by faith.

¹ Hab. ii. 4.

² Gr. *from*.

proclaimed as having appeared, is to bring salvation first to the Jews. But for the latter also, for whom no wisdom or culture can secure what the gospel offers. For what this alone achieves is righteousness, i. e. a
 17 condition of being satisfactory to God, such as no Jew nor Gentile possesses. But it is revealed in the gospels that such a righteousness actually exists, and that, too, a righteousness not effected by men, but coming from God through Him who, according to the promise by Himself, has been sent as the Mediator of salvation. True, that in this respect it presupposes that in faith we receive the divine message of redemption as such. But in this case it infallibly works the believing confidence in this redemption, without which it is impossible to attain deliverance from eternal destruction, and accordingly secure eternal salvation. This is proved by the word of the prophet Habacuc, ii. 4, according to which the just, not on account of their works, but on account of faith, attain to eternal life. Accordingly it is the purpose of the proclamation of the gospel in this letter to prove, that faith is the only means for the attainment of righteousness and of redemption, as this had first been promised in the Old Testament, and accordingly to the Jews. But through this proclamation it has been made effectual for the Gentiles also. It was in the metropolis of the world, where the Jews were so earnestly striving to gain the Gentiles to their own faith, the congregation of the Christians is to secure the perfect certainty, that it was only the gospel which is preached to them, and which they believed, that can lead both Jews and Gentiles to the salvation that God has promised. Whether he will ever succeed in visit-

(18) For ¹ the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who ² hinder the truth in unrighteousness ; (19) because that which is known of

¹ Or, *a wrath.*

² Or, *hold the truth.* Comp. 1 Cor. 7. 30 (Gr.)

ing Rome, the Apostle leaves to the will of God ; but he can at least in this letter expound to them the gospel from the above stated point of view, in order to strengthen their faith.

The fact that the gospel through the righteousness that it reveals can alone bring to Jews and Gentiles deliverance from eternal destruction, the Apostle proves first of all by premising that the Gentiles are the objects of God's wrath. Intentionally, in contrast to the 18 revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel, the Apostle puts the announcement, that hitherto there had been only a revelation of God's wrath from heaven, i. e. in the world-governing activity of God. Before the Apostle explains more fully wherein this revelation of wrath consists, he states emphatically, that it extends over all ungodliness and the unrighteousness that comes from it, by which he means every failure to attain the righteousness demanded by God and which alone is pleasing to Him. He does not mention the Gentiles, because it is his purpose to demonstrate the fact that they are the objects of divine wrath from a general human standpoint. But he unmistakably characterizes them as people who repress the truth that has been bestowed on them, so that the germ of knowledge that has been given them, remains undeveloped. For Israel possessed in an imperishable form the revelation of their God in the Old Testament and could not therefore close their hearts to the knowledge of the truth. But as much as can be known of God in 19 general by the natural man, without the revelation of God in the law and in the prophets, had been made known to the Gentiles in their own hearts. The

God is manifest in them ; for God manifested it unto them. (20) For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, *even* his everlasting power and divinity ; ¹ that they may be without excuse : (21) because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks ; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was

¹ Or, *so that they are.*

Apostle expressly states, that this originated in the divine revelation, which had been given at the creation of the world. It is true that the essence of God
20 was invisible in itself ; but the power and fulness of His divine attributes could surely be recognized in His works, because these were constantly operative in the preservation of the world. As a matter of course, however, these were to be thoughtfully studied. For this very purpose, reason had been given to man ; and he would thus have no excuse if he did not learn to
21 know God in His works. And indeed they have recognized Him, and the elements of the knowledge of the truth are found everywhere in the Gentile world. But the unrighteousness, by which the development of these germs of truth was hindered, consisted in this very fact, that they did not in a practical way make use of the knowledge of God that had been given them, and that they had not recognized God as God by rendering Him praise and thanksgiving. Natural pride prevented them from acknowledging Him who was higher than they. Their selfishness made them forget the Giver while they accepted the gifts. They were unwilling to occupy themselves by thinking of the Most High. They directed their thoughts merely to that which was vain and useless ; and thus these were deprived of their real contents. Their heart, which had been created by God to receive the light of His revelation, became incapable of doing so, because it did not make use of

darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (23) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

(24) Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishon-

its spiritual powers for the end for which these ought to have been employed. Because their heart did not have the light of the knowledge of God, which alone enabled man to understand all other things, it became entirely darkened.

By this very rejection of the divine revelation their 22
conceit in their self-developed wisdom began. And by
this contradiction between their claim to be wise and
their actual condition of total darkness, they became
branded as fools. But the curse of this folly was the
idolatry into which they fell. They exchanged the 23
glory of the imperishable God, whom they should wor-
ship, for that of the images of men and of animals,
which represented to them the objects of their worship.
They then regarded their divinities, which they con-
sidered as represented by these images, as beings who,
at best, were like to perishable men, and from the wor-
ship of steers, birds, or serpents, they descended to the
lower order of creatures. By this development of
heathenism, from the actual rejection of God to the
senseless folly of worshipping idols, or the deifica-
tion of creatures, it is made manifest that God punished
sin by suffering the sinner constantly to fall into
deeper crime.

And now the Apostle shows directly wherein this
revelation of the wrath of God upon the Gentile world 24
consisted. As a punishment of religious rebellion God
suffered them to sink into the most horrible depths of
sin. It was His judgment that their hearts, which had

ored among themselves: (25) for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed ¹ for ever. Amen.

(26) For this cause God gave them up unto ² vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is

¹ Gr. *unto the ages*. ² Gr. *passions of dishonor*.

turned away from God in order to live unrestrained according to their own lusts, should at last in their craving for still further gratification turn to the most unnatural licentiousness. God gave them up to this uncleanness, so that they by dishonoring their own bodies should inflict punishment upon themselves. The Apostle shows that this punishment exactly corre-
25 sponded to their guilt. They had robbed God of His honor, by exchanging His real Being, which He had revealed to them that they should worship it, for the empty images of their idolatry, which were falsely represented to be gods. As they formed these after the fashion of created beings, they worshipped and served the creature instead of the Creator, whom Paul, in order to express his abhorrence of their deeds, here glorifies.
26 He begins now to repeat his demonstration of the way in which this dishonoring of God is punished. God gave them up to disgraceful passions, in which man makes himself the slave of his lusts, so that the unnatural exchange of the object of their divine adoration revenged itself by the unnatural gratification of sexual desires. In his disgust the Apostle does not call the sexes by the names which men and women bear in the divine order of marriage and in the legitimate union of the sexes in this relation, but names each merely according to the bestial use of the other sex for the gratification of lust. For this reason he states that their women had exchanged the natural use for the unnatural, since that sex which by nature is most endowed with the feeling of shame showed the greatest

against nature: (27) and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due.

(28) And even as they ¹refused to have God in *their* knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (29) being filled with all

¹ Gr. *did not approve*.

shamelessness. But the men did the same, and leaving 27 the natural use of the women in their increased lust burned with lust for each other and man with man had practised disgraceful things, as in the other case women had done with women. Paul sees in this the punishment for their religious aberration, which was inevitably to befall them in accordance with the law of divine retribution, so that in their own bodies they should receive the fitting recompense.

To this the Apostle must finally add, wherein the 28 wrath of God reveals itself over them by punishing like with like. They have not appreciated the highest good, to possess God in that penetrating knowledge to which the genius of truth that had been implanted in them could have been developed, if they had not stunted this development by their unrighteousness. For this reason God had given them up to an unworthy mind which can no longer distinguish between good and evil, so that they do even that which also according to the understanding that finds its expression in their national customs, is not right. This complete darkening of their moral consciousness Paul describes by enumerating the vices and the sins which were current among them under three general categories. 29 He first describes the immorality with which they were filled, and places by its side their covetousness, which he regards, like licentiousness, as a specifically Gentile vice. As is often the case in such an enumeration, led

unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, (30) backbiters, ¹hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: (32) who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them.

¹ Or, *haters of God*.

only by the sound of the words in the Greek, which cannot be imitated in modern languages, he groups envy with murder, and with strife the lack of character
 30 in general. In the same way he proceeds from backbiters and slanderers to those wicked persons who are the objects of God's hatred, and from bold insolence to reckless arrogance. From those who show their overbearing character in their haughtiness and boasting he proceeds to mention that extreme of wickedness, which as it were, has constantly the purpose of inventing new crimes. Next to disobedience to parents he places, on account of the similarity of sound in
 31 the term, those without understanding, who will no longer listen to any reasonable thoughts, and those upon whom no reliance can be placed and who will not even respect a covenant, but have repulsed every natu-
 32 ral feeling within them. But the chief point of all is this, that they know full well that they are worthy of death, according to divine order, on account of the things that they have done. Their very mythology contains many instances of the punishment of the godless in the lower world. But notwithstanding this they not only do these things, but while they censure in others the failings that they, unknown to themselves, possess, they even praise those who practise the same. This is the most terrible sign, showing how completely they have lost all moral discrimination.

II Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest¹ another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things. (2) ² And we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that practise such things. (3) And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest

¹ Gr. *the other*. ² Many ancient authorities read *For*.

The Apostle here proceeds to describe how the Jews 1 are the objects of the wrath of God. Here he does not mention them by name; they are first described from the general human standpoint as those who know the will of God and are always ready to judge those who do not do that will. But for this very reason they are not at all to be excused. For if the Gentiles have lost all power of moral discrimination, the Jews show by the very fact that they pass judgment that their moral consciousness is still alive in them. But if he who judges others does the same thing as he whom he judges, he naturally thereby condemns himself. It was not a matter of importance that the Jew individually does all those things which the Gentiles do. His doings are equally sinful. But the Christians knew that the judgment of God, in perfect harmony with 2 the actual state of affairs, is visited upon those who do these things, even though by their judgment of others they pretend to abhor them. And here it becomes clear, that the person whom the Apostle is addressing and whom he pictures as present, is the Jew. For this 3 evident self-contradiction, that a man condemns those who merely do the same things as he also does, can be explained only if he on account of some personal advantage thinks that he can escape the sentence of divine condemnation. But we already know from the statement of the Baptist, Matt. iii. 7 sqq., that the Jews imagined that they, as the chosen children of Abraham, need have no fear of any divine judgment. They indeed

them that practise such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? (4) Or despisest thou the richness of his goodness and forbearance and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (5) but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; (6) who will render to

could apparently appeal for this to the rich abundance of the grace, patience and long-suffering of God, which in the history of Israel He had manifested in a thousand
4 evident cases. But the Apostle declares that the Jew would be guilty of despising these, unless he knew what he should have known, namely, that it was the purpose of this goodness of God to spur him on to a change of heart; and if he acted as though he thought this goodness simply guaranteed to him freedom from punishment for his sins, he showed in this, too, a hardness of heart, which stubbornly resisted all the promptings of God and in this way at last became in-
5 capable of repentance. And if, finally, the punishment that was inflicted upon the Gentiles did not yet strike him, because to him a season of grace was given for repentance, he had thereby brought about the result, that in the future the sum of the wrath of God, which he had drawn to himself by his impenitence, would only become heavier and heavier. For a day would come on which this wrath would take its course, and in this way the righteous judgment of God, which during the prevalence of the divine grace, patience and long-suffering had yet been hidden, would be revealed.

But such righteous judgment consists in this, that
6 He will recompense each one according to his actions, not, according to this, whether a person through this judging acts as though he were the enemy of all that is evil and on the basis of any advantages that he may

every man according to his works: (7) to them that by¹ patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: (8) but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *shall be* wrath and indignation, (9) tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; (10) but glory and honor and peace to every man that

¹ Or, *steadfastness*.

think he has, notwithstanding his doing evil, hopes to go unpunished. The Apostle does not represent the measure of this divine compensation according to his Christian, but according to a general human standpoint. God can in this judgment give to man only that 7 which he has been striving for. If he has been striving for glory and the honor that is connected with it, and which is of an imperishable kind, such as God alone can give, and if he has tried to attain this according to no other manner than that of continuing in doing good, then God will permit him to attain what he has been striving for in eternal life. But if all the efforts of man comes from the purpose of making his own self count, and for this reason he does not obey the truth that has been given him in the revelation, 8 but only the unrighteousness that is in harmony with his own being, i. e. the opposite of the activity that is pleasing to God, then the wrath of God, when the day 9 of judgment comes, will overwhelm him. Then nothing can come upon any man who has done evil but sorrow and terrible tribulation; and in this case upon the Jews first, who had received the divine promises and threats, and shall accordingly be the first to experience their fulfilment. That glory and honor, which they have been striving for, and therewith all salvation in 10 time and eternity, will be given to those who do good; and in this case, too, first to the Jews and then also to the Greeks, because God does not take persons into con-

worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek : (11) for there is no respect of persons with God.

(12) For as many as ¹ have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law : and as many as ¹ have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law : (13) for not the hearers of the law are ² just before God, but the doers of the law shall be ³ justified ; (14) (for when Gentiles that have not the law do

¹ Gr. *sinned*.

² Or, *righteous*.

³ Or, *accounted righteous* ; and so elsewhere.

11 sideration in His judgment. He does not ask whether a person is a Greek or a Jew, but only whether he has done His will.

To the advantages of which the Jews boast, and 12 which God will not at all consider in the judgment, belongs first of all their possession of the law. For the punishment of sin is eternal destruction, even without any set provision of the law, against which men sin, although those who live under a law are to be judged in accordance to a legal norm, which determines for each sin its specific punishment. The 13 fact that they hear a law read (in the synagogue) does not make the Jews just in the sight of God. But those who fulfil the law will be declared just in the judgment. If the mere possession of the law settled the matter, then the Gentiles, too, would have some 14 reason to hope, as they are not altogether without a law. It actually does happen that Gentiles, who as such do not possess a divinely given law, on the basis of natural conscience, do what the law commands. These, indeed, have no law, but they are a law to themselves ; for these actions of theirs evidently prove that what the law demands is written in their hearts. Their natural Christian consciousness tells them the same things as the law demands. This is proved not only by the fact that they actually fulfil the law, but also by their conscience, which compels them to pass judgment on their actions as to these being good or bad, and

by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves ; (15) in that they show the work of the law written ; in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and ¹their ²thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing *them*); (16) in the day when God ³shall judge the secrets of men, according to my ⁴gospel, by Jesus Christ.

(17) But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and retest upon

¹ Or, *their thoughts accusing or else excusing them one with another.*

² Or, *reasonings.* 2 Cor. 10. 5.

³ Or, *judgeth.*

⁴ See marginal note on ch. 1. 1.

which accordingly must possess a standard for such judgment. But the same is also proved by the thoughts 15 in their intercourse with each other, which are so prone to accuse one of his evil doings and at times to excuse another. These people must accordingly have a standard of morals in their hearts, according to which they judge of right and of wrong in the case of others and of themselves. True, the Apostle has shown in chap i. that on earth the voice of conscience is so often stifled, and man even approves of the evil that he sees 16 others do. But on that day on which God will judge the secret thoughts of men, it will be seen that their consciences had accused them, and their thoughts accused each other, and then both of these will testify that they had not lacked a law written in their hearts. But from this judgment the Apostle starts out at all times in his proclamation of the gospel, and shows that it will be observed by the Mediator of salvation, Jesus (cf. Acts xvii. 31).

And now Paul turns again to the Jew, whom he has had in his mind since the beginning of the present chapter. He pictures him showing how proud he is 17 of the fact that he is a Jew, and how contentedly he quiets himself with the consciousness that he is in possession of the law, and boasts that God is his God, who has entered into a covenant of love and communion with

the law, and a gloriest in God, (18) and knowest ¹ his will, and ² approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, (19) and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, (20) ³ a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth: (21) thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? (22) thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? (23) thou who gloriest in the law, through thy trans-

¹ Or, *the Will*.² Or, *provest the things that differ*.³ Or, *an instructor*.

18 Israel. It is indeed a fact, that he has a knowledge of the divine will, and that through the instruction in the law which he has received in the synagogue, he is perfectly capable of distinguishing between the right and the wrong. From this came the genuine Jewish tendency to claim the right of leadership and of teaching
19 others, which to a certain degree was justified by the
20 fact that they possessed the law. For without the shadow of a doubt in the law the knowledge of the divine will, and through it the truth of God, had been
21 given in such a way that it can be recognized as
22 such, and be taught to others. But how does this appear in practise? asks the Apostle. The Jew teaches others not to steal or to commit adultery, but he himself steals and commits adultery. But these are only other forms in which the cardinal sins of the Gentile world, their fornication and their covetousness show themselves. And their seeming abhorrence of all idolatrous doings is found in the crassest contradiction to the fact that they at times, without hesitancy or fear of touching such things, pillage heathen temples,
23 which according to Acts xix. 37, they on one occasion actually did. Hence the final judgment of the Apostle, namely, that while the Jew boasts that he possesses the law, he dishonors God by his transgression of this law.

gression of the law dishonorest thou God? (24) For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, ¹ even as it is written.

(25) For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law : but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision. (26) If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? (27) and shall

¹ Is. lli. 5.

For the honor of God consists in this, that His will, as it has been revealed, is also fulfilled. But if, as Paul says, appropriating the words of Is. lli. 5, on their account the name of God is blasphemed among the 24 Gentiles, because this God is not even able to enforce obedience in His own people, how then can the possession of the law in itself give them any advantage in the judgment of God?

The second and principal privilege of the Jew lay in 25 his circumcision, which was to be the sign of the covenant between God and His people (cf. Gen. xvii. 11). At first that which had been said of the possession of the law seems to apply to circumcision also. For through circumcision the people pledged themselves in a covenant with God to fulfil His law. If the nation did not fulfil this pledge they broke the covenant, and in the judgment they could be regarded as uncircumcised and become the object of God's wrath on account of their sins. If, on the other hand, the opposite took place, 26 and the uncircumcised complied with the demands set up by God's justice, then God would in the judgment regard and treat them as though they were circumcised. For anything above and beyond that salvation, which, according to the account given above by the Apostle, is to be given in the judgment to all who do good, among both Jews and Gentiles, God could not give to the people of His covenant. Those who are by nature (i. e. by the fact 27

not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law? (28) For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; (29) but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

III What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the

that they are born Gentiles) uncircumcised, if they fulfilled the law, must pronounce judgment upon the Jew, who, under conditions so much more favorable than theirs, had become a transgressor of the law. For the Jew possessed the written law, the letter of which cannot be erased, as the law that had been written in the heart of the Gentiles could be darkened. He also possessed circumcision, which constantly reminded him
 28 of his duty to fulfil the law. The genuine and only valuable Judaism does not consist in what the Jew is according to his outward and visible appearance, nor does the true value of circumcision consist in what
 29 is seen outwardly in the flesh. The true Jew is he who is such in the innermost recesses of his heart. The prophets at all times have spoken of the circumcision of the heart, i. e. the cleansing of the heart from all sinful uncleanness, of which the external circumcision could only be the outward sign. The true circumcision cannot be effected by the letter of the law, but only through the Spirit of God, which the Old Testament Judaism did not yet possess.

1 Before men the circumcised Jew might occupy ever so high a position; but the praise of the true Jew which God will bestow in the final judgment, the Old Testament Judaism could as little attain as could heathenism. Paul proposes to himself the question, whether every privilege of the Jew as such and all the benefits of circumcision had not been abrogated. He takes occa-

profit of circumcision? (2) Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of God. (3) For what if some were without faith? shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? (4) ¹ God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written,

² That thou mightest be justified in thy words,

¹ Gr. *Be it not so*: and so elsewhere.

² Ps. li. 4.

sion in this letter to show how highly in every respect he estimates the advantage of the Jews. At this place it will suffice to mention but one, in which all the others are included. The Jews are certainly acquainted 2 with the oracles of God, in which again and again the time is promised when the Messiah is to come, in order Himself to realize the redemption that has been promised to the people of the covenant. The Apostle himself 3 raises the objection that possibly this advantage of the people in circumcision has become of no effect through their transgression of the law. The promises had been given to the people, who, through their circumcision had been bound to fulfil the law, and if the people did not satisfy this obligation that had been laid upon them in the covenant with God, then God was apparently released from His promises. It is true that not by every transgression of the law was the covenant broken. But there have at all times been those who in their wickedness have failed in their allegiance to the covenant, and however few or many these may have been, it seemed that by this fact the promises given to the people had become of no effect. The Apostle indignantly spurns the question, whether their unfaithfulness could do away with the faithfulness of God. God had certainly not given promises conditioned by the fulfilment of the covenant duty by the people, but had given these promises unconditionally. If the faithfulness of 4

And mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment.

(5) But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who visiteth with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.) (6) ¹ God for-

¹ Gr. *Be it not so* : and so elsewhere.

God, according to which He must fulfil His promises, be made of no effect, then His word, which gives these promises, would no longer be true. But God will certainly under all circumstances prove Himself faithful, even if every man, by failing to observe the promise he has made to God, should become a liar. Paul refers in proof of this to Ps. li. 6, where, in bold image taken from human affairs, it is shown that God, if He were placed before the bar of justice, would necessarily be declared just in His words and must be triumphant, as His words at all times turn out to be true.

5 It certainly seems that if the unrighteousness of the Jews, who had become unfaithful in their covenant obligations, only contributes to the end, that the righteousness of God, who under all circumstances makes good His covenant promises, is proved to be true; and that circumcision, being a sign of the covenant, therefore gives the Jew an advantage, which will make him secure before the judgment of God. It could, humanly speaking, be asked, whether it would not be wrong, if God would visit His wrath, which, according to the exposition given above, descends upon Jews as well as Gentiles, upon him who only gives Him the opportunity of furnishing the highest proof of His
6 truthfulness. It is true that the Apostle from the very outset rejects such a thought on this ground, that no idea of injustice could be entertained in connection with God, who is acknowledged to be the Judge of the world, since without justice He could not be the Judge of the world. But he illustrates by an example the contra-

bid : for then how shall God judge the world? (7) ¹ But if the truth of God through my lie abounded unto his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? (8) and why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just.

¹ Many ancient authorities read *For*.

dictory character of this excuse, with which the Jew thinks he can protect himself in the judgment. Nothing was more certain to the Jew, than that the gospel preached by Paul was a gross falsehood and that for this reason the latter had fallen under the judgment of God. 7 But if on the basis of his lies the truthfulness of God was proved in a way all the more glorious, and his lie in such an abundant way contributed to the glory of God, then he, too, thereby was advancing the cause of God. He could thereupon ask, how he, like other men, could be condemned as a sinner who is to be visited by the wrath of God. But if they will not concede that he is to go without punishment, because in the end his falsehood contributes to the glory of God, then they could not claim for themselves, that it was unjust if God visits His wrath upon them, although their unfaithfulness only served to prove His faithfulness. And, more than this, how often had the Jews slandered him and his adherents with the claim that they teach the prin- 8 ciple, "Let us do evil that good may come." Among the believing Jews also there were those who could not be altogether reconciled to the preaching of the Apostle concerning grace, as also those who misinterpreted his doctrine to mean that the greater sin became so much the greater did grace become. But if the Jews imagined that they were free of punishment because their unfaithfulness only proved all the more the faithfulness of God toward the people of circumcision, it was they themselves who set up this principle. And yet nothing is more firmly established than the fact that the

(9) What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin; (10) as it is written,

¹ There is none righteous, no, not one;

(11) There is none that understandeth,

There is none that seeketh after God;

(12) They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable;

There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one:

(13) ² Their throat is an open sepulchre;

With their tongues they have used deceit:

³ The poison of asps is under their lips:

¹ Ps. xiv. 1 ff.; lxxxviii. 1 ff.

² Ps. v. 9.

³ Ps. cxl. 3.

judgment, which must overwhelm those who set up such a blasphemous principle, is just.

As Paul has on the one hand conceded to the Jew an advantage that he cannot lose, and yet on the other hand has emphasized the fact that this cannot protect him in the judgment of God, the question arises:
 9 Have we, the Jews, with whom Paul has in reference to the last question put himself on an equality, any advantage then? The answer is: Yes! in every respect. For his entire discussion so far had purposed to show that both the Jews and the Gentiles were alike the objects of God's wrath, because he has charged them all with being dominated by sin. But as he has in the preceding rather only presupposed the universal sinfulness,
 10 ness, he now proceeds to prove it directly from the
 12 Scriptures. He begins with Ps. xiv., in which, in order from the very outset to emphasize the main thing upon which everything depends, he finds, in v. 1, the principle, that there is none who is righteous, and at once, in v. 2, gives the result of the survey, which according to the Psalmist is held by God Himself, and which is then formulated more literally according to v. 3. He then describes the wickedness of the words of men in the
 13 powerful pictures from Ps. v. 41; cxl. 4. Their throat

ROMANS

[III, 14-19]

(14) ¹ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness :

(15) ² Their feet are swift to shed blood ;

(16) Destruction and misery are in their ways ;

(17) And the way of peace have they not known :

(18) ³ There is no fear of God before their eyes.

(19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law ; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the

¹ Ps. x. 7.

² Is. lix. 7 f.

³ Ps. xxxvi. 4.

is like an open tomb, because the death-bringing and 14 pestilential breath comes from within them; and like the poison of a viper, their deception hides itself under the sweet words of flattery. No longer in figurative language, he says, according to Ps. x. 7, that their mouth overflows with cursings and bitter words. Their words are translated into deeds, according to 15 Is. lix. 7, 8; they cannot quickly enough succeed in 17 shedding blood. On the ways where they have walked are everywhere the marks of destruction and of misery which they scatter about them. A way that leads to 18 redemption they have never known. Paul concludes with the words taken from Ps. xxxvi. 2, according to which they have never directed their eyes to the fear of God.

But now indeed it could be said : Not all these Scriptural passages contain a judgment over all mankind; some of them refer to the Gentiles, and the Jew accordingly need not apply them to himself. For this reason the Apostle explains, that whatever the Scriptures, which he here—although he quotes only from the Psalms and the prophets—yet calls the law, since the Scriptures 19 in all their parts are a norm to us, say, that they say especially for those who stand within the legal order of things, i. e. for the Jews. For them the entire Old Testament has been written, and they are to apply to themselves what is there said concerning the corruption

III, 20-21] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

judgment of God: (20) because ¹by ²the works of the law shall no flesh be ³justified in his sight; for ⁴through the law *cometh* the knowledge of sin.

(21) But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the

¹ Gr. *out of*. ² Or, *works of law*.
³ Or, *accounted righteous*. ⁴ Or, *through law*.

of man through sin. The mouth of every one who would exclude himself from the general sentence should be closed by force, and all mankind shall be subject to the condemnation of God, that is there pronounced
20 against sin. It is the nature of man as a carnal creature, that he is not able of his own power, through the deeds of the law, i. e., by the fulfilment of the will of God as revealed in the law, to secure a declaration of his righteousness before the face of God, before whose eyes even our best deeds are still tainted with sin. A law can by its very nature only reveal the chasm between the human fulfilment and the divine demands, and in this way bring about the knowledge of sin. For this reason the Old Testament, which is a norm for us, by all that it says concerning the sin of mankind, can intend to lead only to a knowledge of sin, in the service of which both Jews and Gentiles stand.

The second part of this letter treats of the righteousness of God, which, according to i. 17, is revealed in the gospel. As in the past, Gentiles and Jews had become the objects of the wrath of God on account of
21 their universally sinful condition, which made righteousness, i. e. the state of being pleasing to God, an impossibility, so in the present time such a righteousness has become an actual reality. It is such a righteousness as can be effected by no law, but at the same time it cannot be rejected by any judgment of the law, because God himself has produced it. This righteousness is not, indeed, anything absolutely new. For that it has already been announced in the book of

prophets ; (22) even the righteousness of God through faith ¹ in Jesus Christ unto all ² them that believe ; for there is no distinction ; (23) For all ³ have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God ; (24) being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : (25) whom God set forth

¹ Or, *of*.

² Gr. *sinned*.

³ Some ancient authorities add *and upon all*.

the law, is soon to be proved by the Apostle ; and that it has already been testified to by the prophets, he has already demonstrated in i. 17. But this righteousness 22 is not like human righteousness, which the Jews thought was the only kind described in the Scriptures, and which they thought was to be obtained only through the fulfilment of the law. It is the confidence in the redemption wrought by Christ, and for this reason is intended for all, and is shared by all who believe. Neither are the Jews excluded, as though they did not need it on account of their advantages ; nor the Gentiles, as though on account of the heinousness of their sins they were incapable of attaining it. For fundamentally there is no difference between them. 23 They have all sinned, and, in consequence of this, lack 24 the honor which God imparts when He declares a man just. This justification takes place solely as a gift through divine grace. So that nobody can claim it on account of his advantages, nor can anybody be excluded on account of his sins. But that this righteousness is bestowed through faith, is seen from the fact that it is based on the redemption from the guilt of sin achieved through Jesus, the Mediator of salvation. For Him 25 has God, in His bloody death, as it were, set up publicly as a means of atonement which, in His eyes, covers all sin. But this atonement is one which can attain its end only through faith. But if in His eyes the sins of every believer are covered, then the latter has been released from the guilt of sin and can be declared just, i. e. pleasing before God. But such a means of atone-

¹ to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God ; (26) for the showing, *I say*, of his righteousness at this present season : that he might himself be ² just, and the ² justifier of him that ³ hath faith in Jesus. (27) Where then is the glorying? It is excluded.

¹ Or, to be *propitiatory*.

² See ch. 2. 13, marg.

³ Gr. *is of faith*

ment, God has prepared for the world in order to show
 26 forth His righteousness. For as He hitherto has permitted sins to go on without punishment, inasmuch as through this long suffering of God's patience new sins were constantly being committed, it might seem that He had refrained from the assertion of His judicial righteousness. But He could not show this in the present time by dealing universal punishment to sinners, as this is to be the time of salvation, but only by the establishment of some means of atonement which in His eyes would cover their sins. For He not only purposed to be just, and not suffer sin to go still longer unpunished, nor to leave them without atonement, but to announce their justification. But, if this is the case, He could not visit mankind with a general judgment, for all would then become its victims. Nor could He pronounce those just who were such on the basis of the works of the law, for there were no such persons. He could pronounce a man just only on the ground of his trust in Jesus, whom He had sent into the world as a means of redemption.

In a triumphant tone the Apostle asks, what ground
 27 there was for that boasting spirit which constantly asserted itself, especially among the Jews, who thought that they could gain for themselves righteousness through the deeds of the law. But not by a dispensation which, like the law, demands works as a means of righteousness, is this boasting made impossible, but only by a dispensation which makes righteousness de-

By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. (28) ¹ We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from ² the works of the law. (29) Or is God *the* God of Jews only? is he not *the* God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also: (30) if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision ³ by faith, and the uncircumcision ⁴ through faith.

(31) Do we then make ⁵ the law of none effect ⁴ through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish ⁵ the law.

¹ Many ancient authorities read *For we reckon*.

² Or, *works of law*.

³ Gr. *out of*. Gal. 3. 8.

⁴ Or, *through the faith*. Gal. 3. 13.

⁵ Or, *law*.

pendent on faith. For this reason, then, because nothing is more certain for him than that all boasting on the part of man is sinful before God, he is con- 28 vinced that every really godly man must agree with him, that, as a matter of fact, everybody is justified by faith to the exclusion of the law as a medium. But, from another side, he further shows that this divine dispensation alone satisfies the religious needs of man. For 29 him nothing is more certain than this fact, which he 30 thinks his Gentile readers will assent to perfectly, even if the Jews do not accept it, namely, that God is not a God of the Jews alone, but also of the Gentiles. But then it follows that this one and only God cannot justify the Jews in one way, and the Gentiles in another, i. e. through the deeds of the law, but does it in the same way through faith, since He justifies the Gentiles through the same faith. Paul asks if, through this doctrine of faith he is making any dispensation of 31 God of no effect; and this he can absolutely deny. For the order of the law, according to which, by its fulfilment, men should become just was, according to him, given to the Jews only in order to rouse them to the knowledge of their sin and their need of redemption. But, on the contrary, he maintains that thereby he is establishing a divine dispensation, namely, the original

IV What then shall we say ¹that Abraham, ²our forefather, hath found according to the flesh? (2) For if Abraham was justified ³by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not toward God. (3) For what saith the scripture? ⁴And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for

¹ Some ancient authorities read of Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh?

² Or, our forefather according to the flesh hath found.

³ Gr. out of.

⁴ Gen. xv. 6.

dispensation, which he already sees prefigured in the justification of Abraham, as he now intends to show.

As Paul purposes to teach a righteousness of God, according to which man, solely on the basis of what Christ has done for him and what God does to him, is to be justified, then the question arises, what Abraham had attained according to the flesh, i. e. as a natural and
 1 human being, and through his own power. By the fact that the Apostle includes himself with his own nation, and calls Abraham their common ancestor, he indicates that he is putting this question from the standpoint of the Jews, for whom it was certain that Abraham, through pleasing God, had obtained much at the hands of God. Before he answers this question he,
 2 however, draws attention to the fact that if Abraham had attained justification from works, as the Jews generally supposed, then he would have had something on account of which he could boast. For in this case, he in a natural and human way, namely, through his works, would have earned this ground of boasting. This much, however, is certain, that he, like any other
 3 man, has nothing on account of which he can boast before God; for the Scriptures expressly declare that his faith was counted to him for righteousness (Gen. xv. 6). But if anything else which was not righteousness had been counted to him for righteousness, then he did not possess righteousness at all, and could not boast before God of having achieved righteousness through the power of his own works. So much then is certain,

righteousness. (4) Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. (5) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. (6) Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, (7) *saying*,

¹ Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered.

(8) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.

¹ Ps. xxxii. 1 f.

that whatever he may have attained in a human and natural way, justification he certainly did not secure. For the counting of faith as for righteousness, upon which his justification was based, was certainly an act of pure grace, as God was in no way bound to count as righteousness anything that was no righteousness. On the other hand, if anybody through any merit of 4 works attained a reward, then this recompense is not ascribed to him as an act of grace, but as a matter of right. Only when a person, renouncing all independent action and merit, depends solely upon Him who pronounces the godless, i. e. him who is the absolute 5 opposite of one who is just, as just can it be said that his faith has been attributed to him for righteousness. But if this took place in the case of Abraham, it is clear that his justification was purely an act of grace, which excluded all boasting before God. In exactly the same way David does not praise him as blessed 6 who has earned righteousness through his works, but 8 him to whom God has attributed righteousness without works, without any deeds or merit on his part, David, in Ps. xxxii. 1, 2, according to the literal sense of the words, speaks only of him to whom God has forgiven his sins, and to whom He no longer attributes them. But he to whom the sins are no longer attributed

(9) Is this the blessing then pronounced upon the circumcision, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say, To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness. (10) How then was it

stands before God justified. Accordingly a righteousness is ascribed to him which he does not possess through his own efforts. If, then, on the basis of this attributed righteousness he is declared righteous, this is righteousness through faith, which Abraham experienced, and which Paul intends to establish as the new, and yet, as is seen from the example of Abraham, as the original dispensation of God.

- 9 This new divine dispensation, as Paul has proved in the case of Abraham's justification, not only makes all boasting impossible, and in this way is in harmony with the innermost essence of true godliness but he also proceeds to show that it exists in the same way for Jews and Gentiles alike. What Paul had above concluded from the fact that God is one, he now proves by the independence of this divine dispensation from both the circumcision and the law, which the Jews considered as their special blessings. Referring to that which he had said concerning the blessing pronounced on him to whom righteousness is attributed from grace, the Apostle asks, if this extends only to the circumcised or to the uncircumcised also. He states by way of explanation, that this question can only be answered from the history of Abraham, in whose case such a justification took place. If he secured this, at a time when he was already circumcised, the conclusion could be drawn that only the circumcised are destined to attain justification, and accordingly only these are the blessed.
- 10 But as Abraham already received this justification in Gen. xv., and circumcision only fourteen years afterwards (Gen. xvii.), it is clear, that the former is entirely independent of the latter. Indeed a sign, such as

reckoned? when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision: (11) and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them; (12) and the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our Father Abraham which he had in uncircumcision. (13) For not ¹through the law was the

¹ Or, *through law*.

Abraham received in circumcision, can be nothing but 11
a seal, i. e. a confirmation of the justification by faith that had been given to him already before he was circumcised. For circumcision was a sign of the covenant which God had made with him, and this covenant God could not make with a sinner, but only with one whom He had declared just. But that Abraham received justification on account of the faith which he already had while not yet circumcised and accordingly *before* circumcision, Paul considers as making clear the distinct character of the justification independent of circumcision. In this way only Abraham could become the father of all, who like himself believed while yet uncircumcised, so that these too could be like him in faith and could now become his children as sharers of a birthright inherited from him. But in this case they could also attain the first and best possession which Abraham had, namely, the gift of righteousness through faith. Natu- 12
rally he was also to be and to remain the father of the circumcised as sharers of the birthright; but not for those who only on account of their circumcision were like him as his children, but only for those who were like him in the faith which our father Abraham already had when he was not yet circumcised, since a true child must walk in the footsteps of its father.

That therefore all the children of Abraham in the 13

promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. (14) For if they that are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the

sense that they follow his example, Gentiles as well as the Jews, are to have a portion in this paternal possession of righteousness by faith, the Apostle further proves, by the fact that the greatest good which Abraham had was entirely independent of the other advantage which the Jews possessed in the law. Paul sees in the possession of the land of Canaan, as promised to Abraham and his seed (Gen. xvii. 8), and because it is again and again said, that in him all the peoples of the earth are to be blessed (cf. Gen. xviii. 18; xxii. 18), the possession of the whole world, which is to be merely the type for the consummation of redemption in the heavenly kingdom of God. But this promise had not in any sense been made conditional upon the law, upon the fulfilment of which the fulfilment of the promise was made conditional, since Abraham had not yet received any law. But, on the contrary, it was given on account of the righteousness of faith. For by the fact that God had accounted this faith as righteousness, it is explained why God had for this reason considered him as worthy of the promise. But Paul finds this fact to be based on the nature of

14 things. For if those persons were the possessors of the promise, who on the basis of a law had entered upon this inheritance of their father, Abraham, on the ground that it had been offered to them as a reward for the fulfilment of this law, then faith, which according to its essence is a confidence in the attainment of salvation, would be rendered void, and the promise, which has full assurance of that which is promised would be made of no effect. For the law, in view of the sinful condition that prevails, can be completely

promise is made of none effect: (15) for the law worketh wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression. (16) For this cause *it is* of faith, that *it may be* according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which

fulfilled by none, and necessarily produces wrath. 15 But as the bestowal of that which is promised presupposes the continuation of the graciousness of Him who made the promise, this graciousness becomes equally impossible, as does the believing confidence in the attainment of that which is promised, which is thereby out of the question. Only when, as in the case of Abraham, no law has yet been given, can there be no wrath-producing transgression of the law. For this reason the promise could not be given through a law, on the fulfilment of which the promise is made conditional; for this condition, which under existing circumstances can never be fulfilled, makes the fulfilment of the promise entirely impossible.

It was intended then that the promised possession of 16 the world, i. e. the consummation of redemption, was to be given on the condition of faith, so that it could be given as a matter of grace, since this lies in the nature of a promise, and not on the condition of a legal service, through which it would have to be earned. On such a condition the reception of that which is promised would continually become a matter of doubt. But the promise was to be something absolutely fixed and that too for all the seed of Abraham, to whom it was given. But in this case it was intended not only for his seed, which is such in accordance with a legal dispensation, or for the bodily descendants of Abraham, and who, as is intimated in Gen. xvii. 10 sqq., were to be circumcised, and for whom, as the Apostle had already above

is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (17) (as it is written, ¹ A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who giveth life to the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were. Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had

¹ Gen. xvii. 5.

stated more fully and will yet explain more fully, the promise remains unchangeable in force. For the entire seed includes those also who in point of faith have become like Abraham and have accordingly in this sense become his children. But that Abraham in reality is the father of all who are like him in faith, the Apostle expressly indicates by the statement, that he in the words "the father of us all" includes both the people of his own nation as well as the Gentile Christian readers; and he justifies this by a reference to Gen. xvii. 5. For if Abraham is appointed to be the father of many nations, then he cannot be merely the father of the Jews, but must also be the father of the Gentiles who are like him in character by their faith, and thereby have obtained the right to participate in the promise that has been given to his seed. Abraham stands before
17 the face of God as a father of Jews and Gentiles, and that too because Abraham trusted Him, who, according to His omnipotence, can make the dead alive, and also can restore the lost power of reproduction in order to fulfil the promise He made him concerning a bodily descendant. For faith in this promise is expressly (Gen. xv. 4) described as that which God had counted to him as righteousness (v. 6). Abraham had confidence in God, because He had in this connection described the yet to be expected descendants in their vast expansion (Gen. xv. 5), and had called as existing that which was not yet even in existence, because before His all-seeing eye it was already realized.

been spoken, ¹ So shall thy seed be. (19) And without being weakened in faith he considered his own body ² now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's ³ womb ; (20) yet, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, (21) and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. (22) Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteous-

¹ Gen. xv, 5. ² Many ancient authorities omit *now*. ³ Or, *womb* ; *yea, &c.*

If the justification of Abraham is to be a pattern of our justification, it is further necessary to show that the faith of Abraham, in its inmost core, was none other than Christian faith, namely, an absolute confidence in the word of God. Contrary to all hope, for 18 which all foundation seemed to be lost, as soon as the conditions upon which hope is based are absent, he yet trusted in a hope, which still considered possible that which seemingly was impossible, namely, that he was to become the father of many nations, because God had on that occasion drawn his attention to the numberless stars of the heavens and had said to him, that so numberless should his descendants become (Gen. xv. 4, 5). This was, however, no blind faith ; for he 19 knew full well, as the Apostle concludes from Gen. xvii. 17, that his body, which was about one hundred years old, had lost its power of reproduction, and that the womb of Sarah, too, was no longer in a condition for conception. However, these things did not make him weak in the faith. But in view of the promise of God, he did not doubt or hesitate on account of such 20 unbelief as under such circumstances seemed almost pardonable, but grew stronger in faith. This of course could only be the case, because he gave God the glory by considering His word as absolutely trustworthy ; 21 and in this way he attained to the unshaken conviction that God would also fulfil what He had promised. This unconditional confidence in the word of God and 22

ness. (23) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him ; (24) but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, (25) who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

V Being therefore justified ¹ by faith, ² we have peace with

¹ Gr. *out of*. ² Many ancient authorities read *let us have*.

in the promise, was the faith that was accounted to him for righteousness.

23 This has not been written for his sake alone, namely,
24 to show the way and the manner of his justification, but for our sake also, to whom, in a like manner, this imputation according to the counsel of God, takes place. We are to learn from this that this imputation is bestowed upon those who in the same unconditional way trust the word and the promise of God. Indeed, we are in a much more favorable condition than Abraham was. For if he trusted Him who was able also to restore his lost power of reproduction, we trust Him, who has actually already awakened Jesus from the dead, and has exalted Him to be our Lord. By this work of His omnipotence He has already furnished the surety for all that which forms the object of our trust in His redemption. But this proves that Jesus did not
25 die the death of the sinner. But on account of our transgressions He has been given unto death, in order to atone for these, and thus to release us from guilt. This proves further, that He has been raised, in order thereby to awaken in our hearts faith in Him as the Mediator of redemption, on the basis of which alone God can also declare us to be just, as has been explained above. This justification is, however, the surety of the consummation of our redemption, as the Apostle now proceeds to show.

1 If, then, our justification has been effected, and that, too, as the whole discussion of the Apostle in reference

ROMANS

[V, 2-3]

God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; (2) through whom also we have had our access ¹by faith into this grace wherein we stand ; and ²we ³rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only so, but ²we also ⁴rejoice in our tribulations :

¹ Some ancient authorities omit *by faith*. ² Or, *let us rejoice*.
³ Gr. *glory*. Ver. 11 ; Heb. 8. 6. ⁴ Or, *let us also rejoice*.

to the new righteousness that has been proclaimed by the gospel has shown, solely on the ground of faith, and not in any way on the basis of any merits, then are we in a state of peace with God. In those whom He has declared just He no longer sees anything sinful that would arouse His anger and cause Him to treat them as enemies. But this we owe entirely to the merits of our exalted Lord, who through His work of atonement has made our justification possible ; and now, too, the fact that He works faith in us, has secured for us ² access to this grace in which we stand, i. e. to the state of grace in which those who are justified stand. In this we glory as a great advantage over all men, because thereby a hope has been held out to us of participating in the glory of God Himself. For sin, which had prevented us from the attainment of this goal, for which we were intended from creation, has by the act of justification been removed in the eyes of God. The triumphant joy which we experience on this account cannot be destroyed or lessened by the tribulations ³ that afflict us ; for while these destroy all earthly hopes, we know that they can only make us all the more sure of the object of a higher hope. In him who has been justified, and who in the peace with God enjoys the blessedness of this state of redemption, tribulation can only work patience, i. e. endurance in faith ; because he will not suffer himself to be deprived of that faith which has secured for him this precious possession, so as not to love the only thing that can exalt him above all earthly tribulations, namely, the

knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness; (4) and steadfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope: (5) and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been¹ shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. (6) For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous

¹ Gr. *poured out*.

- 4 possession of salvation. Every victory that has been won in such endurance over the temptations of unbelief, which approaches us in sorrow, strengthens us by giving us more power of endurance for new trials; and as the consummation of redemption is dependent alone on our triumph in the faith, which has secured for us the entrance into the state of redemption, the certainty of this redemption is thereby strengthened in such tribulations, as also is the hope based on this.
- 5 But this hope is not put to shame, as are so many of our earthly hopes, because what we had hoped for is not secured. For the love of God, which holds out to us such a glorious goal of hope, will certainly lead us to its realization. But of this love we have been made certain through the Holy Spirit, who has bestowed the state of redemption upon us. Like refreshing waters, the consciousness of this has been poured into our hearts. Not as an idea that merely enthuses us, and which could just as easily be only a deceptive phantasy. No: by authentic facts the Holy Spirit makes this love of God certain for us.
- 6 For that Christ has died for us, this certainly is a fact, as we were entirely incapable of helping ourselves in the misery of our sin, not on account of this or that particular accidental failure, but because the period of human inability and helplessness was not yet ended. In the same way it was a fact that He died for the
- 7 godless, who were entirely undeserving of such a sacrifice of love. It very rarely happens that a man will

man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified ¹ by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. (10) For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God

¹ Gr. *in*.

make this sacrifice for the benefit of a just man ; for the only case in which a person can persuade himself to sacrifice his life is certainly then when something is at stake which he regards as his highest good. It is manifest that Christ's sacrifice of love is without a parallel. But this is what the Holy Spirit teaches us 8 to know, namely, that Christ did not give Himself unto death without a purpose, but that it was God who has shown us His own love by ordaining that Christ should die for us. But if God has given us this proof 9 of His love when we were yet sinners, how much more will He continue to show us this love now that we, through the blood which Christ has shed in His atoning death for our good, stand before Him as those who are justified, and accordingly are well pleasing to Him and are worthy of His love. But we shall hereafter be saved through the same Mediator of redemption, so that the wrath of God, which will break forth on the 10 great day of judgment, will not be visited upon us. For this wrath of God visits only the enemies of God. Once we were indeed such on account of our sins. But at this very time God made no less a sacrifice than the death of His Son in order to remove in this one sinful condition the cause of this enmity, and thus to make possible His reconciliation with us. If He has exhibited such love even to His enemies, how is it possible that He would fail to bestow His love upon us who have been reconciled with Him, and save us from destruction by permitting us to participate in that life,

through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved ¹ by his life ; (11) and not only so,² but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

(12) Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin ; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned :—(13) for until the law sin was in the

¹ Gr. *in*. ² Gr. *but also glorifying*. Comp. ver. 2.

to which He has exalted the Son who has died for us.

11 We are not only reconciled to Him so that His enmity is no longer directed toward us ; we are even become such as can glory in God as our gracious God and Father. Why should we not, through Him, through whom we have already been reconciled with God by His gift of grace, finally attain to that goal to which the love of God would lead us, and to a participation in His heavenly life, and thereby in the glory of God Himself ?

12 Because then through Christ not only the righteousness that has been given us by grace, but at the same time the certainty of eternal life, have been assured us, there results a perfect parallel between Christ and Adam. For through the latter, as the one human being, sin, as the controlling power, has come upon all mankind, and, as he transgressed a commandment to which the death penalty was attached, through his transgression death also came. But by virtue of that divine dispensation which determines that death is the penalty of sin, death has passed through to all the individual members of the human race, because, in consequence of this dominion of sin, they have all sinned. Instead of completing the parallel with the concluding sentence, the Apostle drops the latter, in order in detail to prove, that, as a matter of fact, the general dominion of death resulted from the punishment that had been decreed for

13 the sin of Adam. For before the time when a law such

world ; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. (15) But

as that of Moses came, and, like the command given in Paradise, made death the penalty of transgression, sin was already in the world. But sin is under all circumstances liable to punishment, whether it is prohibited by a commandment or not (cf. ii. 12), but it is not considered as deserving of death unless there be a law which determines that the penalty for sin shall be death. And yet death prevailed from Adam to Moses, 14 even over those who did not, after the manner of Adam, commit a transgression against which death was set as a penalty. In this way if it has been established that through Adam not only sin but also death as a penalty of sin has come into the world, then he is only a prophetic type of the future Adam, through whom righteousness and life are to come into the world. There was no need of the concluding sentence, in which the parallel between Adam and Christ is completed. The Apostle can, on the contrary, apply himself to the discussion of several discrepancies in this remarkable and from first to last opposite parallel, because thereby the significance of the redemption which Christ has brought is more clearly set forth from different points of view.

He starts out with a contrast between sin, in which all 15 evil had without a doubt begun, and the gift of grace which Christ had bestowed upon us in His atoning death, because with this His work of atonement began. In both cases there is seen the diffusion among the many of a result that originated in an individual—in the former case from Adam to all the children of Adam,

not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. (16) And not as through one that

and in the latter from Christ to all believers. But it is clear that if on the fall of Adam death had been appointed to be the penalty of sin, it was a necessary consequence that the many should die, in that they had all sinned. In contrast to this stands the grace, which Christ has shown forth to us by giving Himself up to death, in which it is by no means settled, what the nature of a gift to be bestowed as the result of this death is to be in itself. It was yet necessary that the grace of God accepting this death as a means of atonement and as a ransom, should supervene. In this case, however, so much was clear, that the effect of this gift of Christ, with which the grace of God co-operated, was not only something far more certain, since in the mind of the Apostle the grace of God was the most certain of all things, but also something much richer, since in this case it not only achieved for us the salvation which we did not possess, but also took away the misery which Adam's fall had brought down upon us.

- 16 But in this parallel a second discrepancy is to be seen. The misery of death has been brought upon us through one who had sinned. The judgment which God as judge had visited upon sin, on account of the one who had committed a sin, the penalty of which was death, had become the judgment of condemnation that condemned all sinners to death. But it was different in the case of the gift which God's grace had bestowed upon us through Christ's death. In the former case the justice of God had appointed for all sinners that punishment which one man had brought down upon himself. In the latter case God did not inquire

sinned, so is the gift : for the judgment *came* of one unto condemnation, but the free gift *came* of many trespasses unto ¹justification. (17) For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one ; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and ²of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, *even* Jesus Christ. (18) So then as through one trespass *the judgment came* unto all men to condemnation ; even so through one act of righteousness *the free*

¹ Gr. *an act of righteousness*. Rev. 15. 4 ; 19. 8.

² Some ancient authorities omit *of the gift*.

first what result follows of itself from the sacrifice of Christ's death, but based His plan of salvation on the fact that such transgressions abounded as made the attainment of life an impossibility for all, unless the attribution of righteousness to man were based on a covenant different from that of the law. For this reason from the death of Christ He developed a new dispensation, according to which every one, who in faith put his trust in this death, should be pronounced just. If then on account of one transgression death has 17 attained universal dominion through the one man who had by this act brought down upon himself and upon us the condemnation of death, then with all the greater certainty was it possible, that life should be given to mankind through the one Jesus Christ. For that those who receive the great riches of God's grace, which offered to the believers according to this new dispensation righteousness as a free gift, must attain eternal life, was certainly already implied in the fact, that from the very beginning life was made conditional on righteousness. The Apostle purposely refrains from speaking of a dominion of life as he had spoken of a dominion of death ; for in that life the believers are themselves to share the royal rule of Christ.

Paul now comes to a recapitulation of the parallel 18 that he has expounded from every point of view. As through *one* transgression the judgment of condemna-

gift came unto all men to justification of life. (19) For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. (20) And ¹ the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace

¹ Or, *law*.

tion had come upon all men, so through that one device of God, which attributed righteousness to faith alone, God had the gracious gift of righteousness come for the
19 justification of all men. Without this no life can be imparted. For it was through the disobedience of one man that sin as a dominating power spread over all mankind, as has been said in the beginning, and thus the many children of Adam now stand before God as sinners. On the other hand, through the obedience with which One Man gave Himself up to that death which had been ordained by God to be an atonement many believers henceforth can stand before God as just. In this way it has been made clear from all sides, that as through Adam sin and death came into the world, so through Christ came righteousness and life.

20 The Apostle opens the third part of his letter with the question, what then had been the purpose of the law, as it could not remove the terrible consequences of the sin of Adam, nor in any way impart to us the blessed results of Christ's death. The effect of Adam's sin has diffused itself through the whole world, so that that single transgression has become aggravated by new transgressions, which would not fail to be multiplied after God had given a law to sinful people. This result of a law would of course have been purposed by God only that grace thereby might become all the greater. This grace has indeed enabled every one to overcome the power of sin that had been increased by the law. The purpose of God was that the supremacy of sin, which appeared in the fact that death was the

did abound more exceedingly: (21) that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

VI What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? (3) Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were

common lot of all, should be overcome and the supremacy of grace henceforth take its place. Thus grace through the new righteousness given by God leads to eternal life through that Christ who has been exalted by God to be our Lord and the Mediator of our salvation.

But now comes the question, whether from this 1 statement could be drawn the principle which at times has been ascribed to the Apostle as an imaginary consequence of this doctrine (cf. iii. 8), namely, that men should persist in sin in order that grace may be increased in its effect. The Apostle spurns this idea with the declaration, that the Christian cannot possibly live 2 in sin as his native element, since he is dead to sin and thereby has severed all connection with it. He accordingly appeals to the experience of redemption that all Christians possess, in order now to explain when and how we have experienced the deliverance from the dominion of that sin which originated in Adam and was only increased by the law.

It is in baptism that the Christians have experienced 3 this redemption. Paul appeals to what the readers know, namely, that baptism in Christ is above all things a baptism unto the death of Christ. For if we accept Him as the Mediator of our salvation, we certainly confess that He has died for our redemption. But now the immersion in baptism is not an empty form, but rather it represents that we, through the communication of the

baptized into his death? (4) We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have become¹ united with *him* in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection; (6) knowing this, that our old man

¹ Or, *united with the likeness*. . with the likeness.

Spirit in baptism, are united with Christ, through whose communion we are, as it were, immersed into His death, 4 and accordingly must die with Him. As burial is the confirmation of the fact that one has died, in the same way immersion in the waters of baptism is a sign that we have been immersed in the death of Christ, and have experienced a dying such as His was. But as the death of Christ led to His resurrection through the glory of the Father, who could not permit His Son to remain in death, so our dying in Christ through baptism destines us henceforth to walk in an entirely new manner of life. This naturally we cannot of ourselves achieve, for it can be accomplished only through such a miracle of omnipotence as that which the glory of God wrought in the resurrection of Christ. For this new communion with Christ has been established in baptism, as God sent to us His Spirit, that is the Spirit of Christ. 5 If we then have the Spirit that He has, we are, as it were, united with Him in a communion of life that cannot be severed. If this communion proves true in reference to His death from the fact that we too die, though indeed not by a physical death, but by a death that is similar to His, then the same thing must prove 6 true in reference to the resurrection. For we know that this dying with Christ is nothing else but the dying of the old man within us, of our natural and sinful self, which only deservedly suffers the most painful and disgraceful punishment of death upon the cross, which He, though innocent, has suffered for us. But this can

ROMANS

[VI, 7-10]

was crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin ; (7) for he that hath died is ¹ justified from sin. (8) But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him ; (9) knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more ; death no more hath dominion over him. (10) For ² the

¹ Or, *released*. Comp. Eccclus. 26, 29 (Gr.) ; ch. 7. 1. ² Or, *in that*.

only have as its purpose that our bodies, the manifestations of whose existence so far have all been in the service of sin, cease to be under the dominion of sin, so that we, who belong to sin with body and life, are no longer the slaves of sin. This servitude of sin could 7 only be broken by death. Only when the soul is in death separated from the body, in which sin has attained the dominion, has it been, as it were, given to itself again, and has returned to its normal state released from sin. The latter then no longer finds any body over which it can usurp dominion and make this body do its bidding.

For this reason we are dead with Christ in baptism. 8 Only in this way could we be delivered and be made free from the supremacy of sin. But if this dying of the old man within us has taken place in our living communion with Christ, then we are convinced that we shall henceforth live with Him, as He, through His resurrection, has entered into a new life. Of course, the Apostle does not in this connection speak of a bodily resurrection, no more than he spoke of a physical death in connection with our dying with Christ but concerning a life in His communion, which once for all makes impossible the dominion of sin, and is an independent walk in a new relation of life. For we cer- 9 tainly know that Christ, after He had been raised from the dead, no longer dies, but has entered into eternal life. Thus, a life in communion with Him must be one that is permanent. Death has no more power over Him ; 10

death that he died, he died unto sin ¹ once : but ² the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. (11) Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

(12) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that

¹ Gr. *once for all*. Heb. 7. 27. ² Or, *in that*.

for if He has once died, not as we all die on account of our sins, but for the purpose of atoning for our sins, He is thereby dead to all connection with sin. At one time sin had dominion over Him, since the sin of man, which was to be atoned for through Him, brought death upon Him. But after His work of redemption had been finished, He has no more connection with sin. The life which the Risen Lord lives now belongs only to God ; and a life that belongs to God alone can no longer end in death, for the simple reason that it has
 11 no further connection with sin. If we know this concerning Christ, then we are to judge in the same way concerning ourselves, after we have through baptism been transplanted into a communion of life with Him. We are dead to sin, and have nothing more to do with sin, so that it can no longer rule over us ; but we live a new life which belongs to God, and to His service alone.

Only after we have been delivered from the dominion of sin can we attain to the realization of actual righteousness. Nor must we consider that this came about in a magical way, as an effect of baptism. Since
 12 in baptism we have died with Christ, and accordingly have died unto sin, the Apostle may safely admonish us that sin must no longer rule supreme in our body, which through its mortality constantly reminds us of the destruction to which our sins subject us. This could only have one purpose, that we again become servants of the lusts of the body which has become

ROMANS

[VI, 13-14]

ye should obey the lusts thereof: (13) neither present your members unto sin *as*¹ instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members *as*¹ instruments of righteousness unto God. (14) For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.

¹ Or, *weapons*. Comp. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

sinful through their dominion; and this we surely cannot desire, since through our baptism we have entered into the communion of life with Christ and sin accordingly can no longer rule over those who are baptised. But when in baptism we have been made free from sin, we cannot again with full knowledge or consent give room to it. A compulsory supremacy of sin no longer exists. The Christian is no longer compelled 13 to give his members over to the service of sin, by which the members become weapons with which unrighteousness, i. e. hostility to God, fights against the will of God. For this reason it is proper to exhort Christians no longer to do this. But, on the contrary, because the new life which they have received in baptism has come out from that death in which they have died unto their sinful past, they are to place themselves entirely at the disposal of God, to whom their new life belongs, as the life of Christ does, when they have arisen for this purpose. Then their members will rather become weapons for the contest which righteousness is waging for the realization of its purposes against all His enemies. The Apostle can demand this, because now for the first time has this been made possible. Sin is no longer to have dominion over 14 them, as it formerly ruled over them absolutely, because they are no longer under a law which can only make demands upon them, but are under grace, which, according to its essence, itself gives and works that which it aims at attaining. This grace we have expe-

(15) What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. (16) Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as ¹servants unto obedience, his ¹servants ye are whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (17) But thanks be to

¹ Gr. *bondservants*.

rienced in that fundamental transformation; and under its sway we are at all times sure of its help, which enables us to do what we desire. The fact that we are
15 not under a law, does not give us the liberty of our own choice; and that we are under grace does not give us the prospect of being free from punishment, so that we then could continue in our sins. It is quite possible that the Apostle, boasting in reference to grace, may in several quarters have been thus misinterpreted. Unless this has been the case, he would not so fully have entered upon the question. But the state of grace is absolutely incompatible with a continuation in sin.

In order to prove this the Apostle proceeds to state what is the nature of servitude, just as Jesus did on
16 one occasion in Matt. vi. 24. It is characteristic of the service of a slave that he must devote himself to one alone. He who devotes himself to anybody as a slave, must be the slave of that one alone, and him alone he must obey. There is no choice between different masters. Either a person is a slave of sin, which leads to death, or he is a slave to obedience, which leads to righteousness. We may be surprised that Paul does not speak here of a slave of righteousness, who would be the natural opposite of the slave of sin. He thus
17 implies that for his readers such a choice is no longer possible. They have already made their choice between the alternatives. He thanks God for this, that the time of the servitude of sin is already passed. In baptism they have been made free from the supremacy of sin, and they have been baptized because they have

God, ¹ that, whereas ye were ² servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that ³ form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered : (18) and being made free from sin, ye became ² servants of righteousness. (19) I speak after the manner of

¹ Or, *that ye were . . . but ye became.* ² Gr. *bondservants.* ³ Or, *pattern.*

become believers. But faith is nothing else than obedience to the words of the message of redemption, which demands acceptance in faith. But by the very fact that they have received this, compelled by nobody and from their own choice, they have thereby already declared for the service of obedience, which Paul places in opposition to the service of sin. Now there are many kinds of doctrinal formulas, in which the different preachers of the gospel express the message of redemption. They have not themselves selected those formulas which they would accept in faith. It was by God's providence that this form of doctrine had been implanted in them, the principle of which states that they are no longer under the law, but are under grace. If they have accepted the formula in the obedience of faith, they have already declared themselves for the service of obedience and against the service of sin, and they cannot misinterpret this doctrine to mean that justification leads to the service of sin.

But if they are freed from sin, they are not thereby 18 left without any master. They have only changed their master. Thereupon Paul names the Master to whom they now belong, and calls Him by that very name, which we should expect from what has preceded. For the opposite of sin is righteousness, or the normal state of being pleasing to God. They have become the servants of righteousness. The Apostle expressly 19 states, that, strictly speaking, this does not apply to their new condition. He makes use of this figure of a slave taken from natural and human life, merely on account of the weakness of their flesh, which so easily

men because of the infirmity of your flesh : for as ye presented your members *as* servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members *as* servants to righteousness unto sanctification. (20) For when ye were ¹servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness.

¹ Or, *bondservants*.

misinterprets the true liberty of the Christian as equivalent to the freedom of their own will. For this reason he speaks of a slavery of righteousness, although a man who has been freed from the chains and bonds of sin and serves only the will of God, is in a condition of genuine liberty. For their former condition this figure is applicable. As heathen they formerly served sin in all the shapes which it assumed in the Gentile world, such as that of following uncleanness and lawlessness, which had no further purpose than to bring about lawlessness, and hence of that boundless unrestraint which many mistake for genuine freedom. To subject one's members to such degrading sins, certainly can be the fate only of a person who is the slave of another. Only for the purpose of making such a misinterpretation impossible, he states that they now should devote their members to the service of righteousness. For man's only worthy object is his own sanctification, i. e. the constant growth in the realization of his consecration to God, the state of being like unto God, since God has commanded us to be holy as He is

20 holy. As the Apostle speaks of the servitude of righteousness it is presupposed that before this men had been free, and accordingly we can say, that when we were slaves of sin we were free in reference to righteousness. They have accordingly only exchanged one kind of freedom for another, as they had one kind of servitude for another.

The question is, which is the true freedom and which which is the true servitude? "By their fruits ye shall

(21) What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. (22) But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. (23) For the wages of sin is death ; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

VII Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men who

know them " Accordingly it is only necessary to inquire what fruit they at that time had as the result of their freedom and of their servitude. But these were **21** the sins and the flagrant deeds of their heathen past. How they must be ashamed of this is clear from the fact that the end of these deeds was death, because at that time they thought that they were enjoying freedom under such circumstances. But now, as their freedom is the freedom from sin, and their servitude at bottom **22** is nothing else than a servitude of God, which in itself is the highest dignity that a man can have, they really as a result have the fruit of righteousness. For this **23** new state of servitude and freedom leads to the highest goal of which man is worthy, that of complete consecration to God. For the wages which sin yields when men serve it and fight for its cause, is death. But intentionally the Apostle does not designate eternal life as a payment for sanctification. For this life from its first beginning in baptism is wrought in us through God, and its goal is nothing that we can ourselves earn, but is and ever will be the gift of God's grace, which He imparts to us in Christ our Lord as the Mediator of our salvation.

The new righteousness of life, as is the case with that **1** righteousness of faith which is attributed to us by grace, is not, however, realized in us without the assistance of the law. This is based on the freedom of the law, which is the right of the Christian since his baptism.

know ¹ the law), that the law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth? (2) For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the

¹ Or, *law*.

True, this seems to be of importance only to believers from among the Jews, who formerly were under the law; but if the Gentiles are converted to the God of Israel, and have become believers in the Saviour whom He has sent, they should have accepted His law also, if the Christian as such were not free. But how he has become free, Paul makes clear to his Gentile readers by using the analogy of another legal relation. It is not the knowledge of the Mosaic law to which he appeals in the case of his readers, although they doubtless were acquainted with it from hearing it read in their public services, but to their knowledge of law in general, as the knowledge and understanding and acquaintance with law was a special gift of the Romans. But in this instance stress is laid on the fact that the Old Testament law, like all law in general, can have power over
2 a man only during his lifetime. This fact the Apostle wishes to prove in connection with the fundamental principle of the law of marriage in general, which was same among the Romans as it was among the Jews. Naturally in connection with the law of marriage it can only be shown, that death dissolves all legal duties in general, but an example of our own death freeing us from such a duty, in the nature of the case, could not be given. In the former case, indeed, the wife, since she was subject to the husband, was legally bound to the husband only as long as he was yet living. But when the husband died, the woman became free. But the Apostle, by making use of a peculiarly fine form of expression in the Greek, which cannot be imitated in modern language, states that the wife too before the law had ceased to be

husband. (3) So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. (4) Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, *even* to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth

that which she was, namely, a party in the married relation, when by the death of her husband she had been freed from the law that determined her relation to her husband. For she is not said to have committed adultery unless she is joined to another man during the lifetime of her husband. But if she is freed by his 3 death from that law, then she secures the right of remarriage and is no longer said to commit adultery should she unite herself with another man. She has ceased to be a party in a matrimonial relation, and for that reason she can no longer be said to commit adultery.

The application of this is clear. The Apostle above 4 proceeded from the principle that in baptism we have died as far as the old man is concerned, because in baptism we have been transplanted into the communion of life with Christ, whose body has been slain on the cross, and whose death must become a part of our experience. That old man was obligated to fulfil the law, if the believer was a Jew; or this obligation had to be assumed if a Gentile was converted. But if he had died with Christ, then this bond of duty was dissolved. He could now enter upon the same relation of duty as that of the risen Christ, and he had to do this, as the Apostle has shown, because his being raised with Him was to lead us in the new life that has been given us to serve God. To Him our life, that has been put under obligation to Christ, is to bear the fruit that He

fruit unto God. (5) For when we were in the flesh, the ¹ sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. (6) But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

(7) What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid.

¹ Gr. *passions of sins*.

expects from us. In our lives, before we were Christians, we could not produce this fruit, for it was a life in the flesh, i. e. in our old natural being, in which sin ruled. But the subjection to the law could not produce this fruit. For the Apostle has already indicated (v. 20) and later will prove still further, that through the law at all times only passions that produce new sins were aroused, which make use of our members as the means for producing fruit of a contrary character, which were productive only of death as the punishment of sin. But now we are relieved of all obligation to the law, because we have died to that old nature which bound us to the law, and this was our life in the flesh. Henceforth we are to render our service in a new mind that is determined by the spirit, and not in one that is determined by the letter of the law, which, as long as we are yet in the life of the flesh, as matters stand, can only be of a sinful character.

The hints which the Apostle has repeatedly given concerning the effects of the law in promoting and increasing sin, induce him to put the question whether the law is sin, i. e. as an anti-divine power. Naturally he denies this in a most emphatic way. But yet he must express himself in reference to the relation of the law to sin. He does this from the standpoint of his own personal experience, which is of importance in this connection because he presupposes that everybody who has lived under the law has had the same experience. But

ROMANS

[VII, 8-9]

Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through ¹ the law : for I had not known ² coveting, except the law had said, ³ Thou shalt not ² covet : (8) but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of ² coveting, for apart from ¹ the law sin is dead. (9) And I was alive apart from ¹ the law once : but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died ;

¹ Or, *law*.

² Or, *lust*.

³ Ex. xx. 17 ; Dt. v. 21.

this experience shows that we cannot become acquainted with the power of sin except through the law. For we become acquainted with the very first manifestations of this power of sin in sinful desires, only then when the law says that we shall not covet (Ex. xx. 17). Whatever the object of this forbidden coveting may be, a sinful coveting takes place only when it is directed to a forbidden object. But the law as such cannot possibly arouse this sinful desire. Sin must in some way ⁸ be already present in us if sin, by the fact that the law forbids the coveting of certain objects, is immediately called into being by this prohibition to indulge in lust after forbidden things. For without the law, which determines what is contrary to God's will, sin certainly cannot reveal itself as a desire for that which is against God ; it is as good as dead, i. e. incapable of showing any vitality.

At one period the Apostle lived in the state of so- ⁹ called childlike innocence, in which case no law awakened in him the consciousness of the contrast between that which should be and that which he wanted, a life which alone deserved to be called life in the full sense of the term. Because at that time he did not yet feel himself cramped and hindered by anything in the expressions of his natural life. True, the power of sin was already in him, as it is in all men by nature ; but as it was not capable of any living expression, it was, as it were, condemned to a condition of death. It only began to live when, with the coming of the command-

VII, 10-13] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(10) and the commandment, which *was* unto life, this I found to be unto death: (11) for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. (12) So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. (13) Did then that which is good become

ment, it received the impulse for a new manifestation within him, as it had shown itself from the time of
10 Adam to be the ruling power in all men. The fact that sin became alive in him resulted in the ceasing of this true life which he led, which is the condition of moral unconsciousness, so that he became the victim of a kind of death. Such is always the case where the unhampered natural development of life is prevented by the interference of another power, which in this case is the power of sin. But as sin was roused to make itself felt only by this command, he was compelled by this experience to acknowledge that the command, which, through its fulfilment, was intended to secure for us eternal life in him, had the opposite effect of bringing
11 him spiritual death. For sin, which by the command was called into life, made use of this commandment to deceive him, by representing to him what was forbidden as something that was desirable and wholesome. The desire for that which was prohibited thus aroused by the command, led him further on in this inner self-contradiction, with which all true life ceased.
12 And thus, since the desire always gained the victory over the commandment it led to eternal death. In this way it is clear that the law itself is holy, and every commandment is holy as a command of God. Just is its judgment and wholesome. It is impossible that what is in itself good should become the cause of death ;
13 sin alone can be this. Things were thus ordained so that sin might be manifested as sin, which took occasion from the presence of the law to arouse sinful desires in man

death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; —that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful.

(14) For we know that the law is spiritual : but I am carnal,

and thereby to accomplish his death ; and in this way that which in itself was wholesome became perverted into its opposite. Thus sin was thereby not only to be revealed in its true character, but was also to be intensified in this its character by the command, because it was sin that induced man to transgress the law.

The Apostle is convinced that everybody must be 14 acquainted with the real reason why sin can in this way change the blessing of the law into a curse. The law originated in the Spirit of God ; but man by his nature is of flesh. The fact that the natural and human creature did not possess this divine Spirit in himself, did not in itself produce an opposition to the divine law. But because humanity had come under the domination of sin, as one who has been sold as a slave, for this reason the law could not do otherwise than provoke the opposition of that carnal self which was controlled by sin. As the Apostle seems to declare this concerning his present self, and, as experience shows that the Christian, too, is compelled to struggle against the power of sin in his own flesh, it has all along been thought that Paul is here describing the opposition in which the law stands to our carnal self while we are in the state of grace. It is, however, impossible that, after having shown, in chapter vi., that in baptism we have been delivered from the dominion of sin, he can now presuppose that we have subsequently been sold into the slavery of sin. He is accordingly speaking of the state under the law, and describes this only by picturing vividly our natural and human nature as

VII, 15-19] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

sold under sin. (15) For that which I ¹ do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. (16) But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. (17) So now it is no more I that ¹ do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. (18) For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to ¹ do that which is good is not. (19) For

¹ Gr. *work*.

15 it is outside of redemption. Paul sees that he has come under the dominion of a strange power, from the fact that he cannot comprehend the why and wherefore of his own actions. For while under other circumstances that which we do is determined by our inclination, he always does what by the law of God is recognized to
16 be evil, and what he abhors. The fact that he does what he really desires not to do, shows that in his
17 innermost nature he still is in harmony with the law, and admits that everything that it demands is desirable and good. But if this is the case, then it is not his real self which does these things, but it is the power of sin dwelling in him.

But the fact that this power prevails so absolutely in him is based on this, that in him, in so far as he is a carnal creature, a power for good, which can resist the
18 power of sin, does not exist. This desiring of the good, which the law has produced in this part of his nature that is related to God, is indeed at all times present, so that he can always attain this purpose; but the accomplishing of the good, which of a necessity would have to be brought about in some way through his nature as a carnal being, is not subject to his control. For in the latter there is no power of good, which could overcome the impulses that proceed from the power of sin controlling the flesh. The Apostle feels himself called upon to prove this from the conclusion which he has already arrived at from the consideration of his own
19 case. According to this he does not do the good that

the good which I would I do not : but the evil which I would not, that I practise. (20) But if what I would not, that I do. it is no more I that ¹ do it, but sin which dwelleth in me, (21) I find then ² the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. (22) For I delight ³ in the law of God after the inward man : (23) but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity ⁴ under the law of sin which is in my members. (24) Wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me out of

¹ Or. *work*. ² Or *in regard of the law*. Comp. ver. 12, 14. ³ Gr. *with*.
⁴ Gr. *in*. Many ancient authorities read *to*.

he wishes, but on the other hand the evil that he does not wish to do is the constant object of his activity. This again he now bases on the fact, that if he does 20 what his real self does not wish to do, he is no longer doing his own will, but acting under the power of sin, that dwells and rules in him. Only from this the absolute law results, which he finds present in him when he 21 examines himself and which binds him, although he always wishes to do what he has recognized as the good and the right. But as soon as he proceeds to act, the following of evil is so constantly the most natural course to take, that as a matter of fact it is always taken by him. The reason for this is to be found in 22 the fact, that this pleasure in what is good, the delight in it which he shares with the law of God, remains restricted to the impotent inner side of his being. That which becomes manifest in the expression of his life, is at 23 all times only a different kind of a law, which compels our members, i. e. the instruments of the activities of life, to obey its behests. But this law is in constant battle with the law of God, which reason demands that he shall follow. And the outcome of this struggle is always the same, namely, that this foreign law takes him captive and forces him to serve the law of sin, which is that very law which he finds in his members. The remembrance of this miserable state forces from 24

¹ the body of this death? (25) ² I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God ; but with the flesh the law of sin.

¹ Or, *this body of death*.

² Many ancient authorities read *But thanks be to God*. Comp. ch. 6. 17.

the Apostle the expression of wretchedness, and he calls for the deliverance of his body from this state of death. For a body which has been condemned to such absolute impotence, that the real self never determines the manifestation of its life, which has become subjected to a power foreign to the body, is worse than dead ; and the man who is fettered to such a body cannot be otherwise than miserable. But that this state of things is for the Apostle one of the past, is shown by the thanksgiving to God which he immediately appends, and which is
 25 given through Christ, because it is He through whom God has delivered him from this condition. For in the communion of life with Him, God had again given him the power to withdraw his body from the service of sin and to dedicate it to His service. But if this has become possible only because Christ has been exalted to be our Lord and the Mediator of redemption, then the Apostle can summarize the result of the entire preceding description he gave of his condition under the law in this, that as long as he had himself only to depend upon, he indeed was in servitude to a law of God, according to his reason, since he was compelled to acknowledge what was demanded of him as something good and wholesome, but according to his carnal nature he was subject to a law of sin. For reason, which, is able to cope successfully with the supremacy of sin, is a purely theoretical side of our being. With this the proof has been completed from all sides, that through the law we can never attain to this new righteousness of life. For the law can indeed convince reason of the fact that its fulfilment is desirable, but cannot at all

VIII There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in

enable us to accomplish this fulfilment, as it rather only arouses the opposition of our carnal nature against itself and in this way increases sin instead of overcoming it.

Paul at length comes to the point where he expressly 1 shows how, not through the law, but through the Spirit which has been given to us in the communion of life with Christ, the new righteousness is actually realized in us. In a triumphant spirit he begins by stating that now, since we no longer stand alone, and that God has come to our assistance in our needs through Christ, no more sentence of condemnation is possible for us. For the sentence that falls to our lot on account of the sins which we had committed, has been set aside by our justification; and that which we would draw down upon ourselves through the fact that we are constantly sinning, is averted by our deliverance from the supremacy of sin. But naturally this applies only to those who through baptism have been engrafted into the communion of Christ, as has been shown in chapter vi. For 2 only in this way has a new power been introduced into our lives, which has been given to us in baptism. This is the Spirit of God, which has effected for us a communion of life with Christ. That which this Spirit demands, He, too, is able to accomplish in us by virtue of His divine power; and wherever this Spirit of life rules, there the state of death must cease to be, into which the dominion of sin has brought us. For this reason, in the communion of life with Christ, the law of this Spirit of life has delivered us, or, our Apostle says, addressing himself to every individual Christian, has delivered *you* from the law of sin, with the dominion of

Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. (3) For what the law could not do, ¹ in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of ² sinful flesh ³ and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : (4) that the ⁴ ordi-

¹ Or, *wherein*.

² Or, *and as an offering for sin*. Lev. 7. 37, etc., Heb. 10. 6, etc.

³ Or, *requirement*.

which death has come over us. For that in the end only *one* law can govern us, the Apostle has shown clearly enough in describing his experiences under the 8 Old Testament law. This law purposed to govern him, but it found in his flesh the all controlling dominion of sin, which converted all the blessings contemplated by the law into a curse. For this reason it was impossible for the law to cause him effectively to fulfil its demands. It was too weak for this purpose, and succumbed to the resistance, which our human nature, being controlled by sin, offered. God Himself was compelled to interfere, and He gave up His most precious possession, His own Son, sending for this purpose Him who was the dearest object of His love. But this was a sacrifice; for this Son was compelled, since the purpose was to deliver our flesh from the dominion of sin, to appear in a form similar to the flesh, that in our case was throughout under the power of sin, in order, so to say, to contend with sin for the dominion of this very sphere which hitherto had been under its undisputed sway. But with this God had, however, already condemned sin, which hitherto had caused the sentence of condemnation to be passed upon us, to a loss of its dominion; for that sin did not succeed in becoming master also of the flesh of His Son, as it had hitherto obtained the supremacy of all mankind, was a matter of course. Even in His carnal body He continued to be the Son of God. But with this it had been made possible, that in us also, who had through the communication of His Spirit entered into the communion of life

nance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (5) For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (6) For the mind of the flesh is

with Him, the just demands of the law were fulfilled. Not for the purpose of freeing us from the fulfilment of the will of God, that was revealed in the law, had we been made free of the law, but to make possible this fulfilment through the Spirit, who had come in His place, and who not only reveals to us the will of God, but at the same time, too, invites us to fulfil it.

Therewith it has then been said, that He will not force us to this. For God does not want an enforced fulfilment of His will. He has sent us His Spirit, who makes this possible ; but whether we in all our conduct will permit Him to direct us or not, is our own affair. Our carnal nature has not been changed thereby. This nature has been delivered from the dominion of sin and can no longer compel us to do the will of sin ; but it retains its own will, which can also take an antagonistic attitude towards God. If then we permit ourselves to be governed in all our doings by this nature, then the demands of the law will not be fulfilled in us. But it is not a matter of decision in individual cases. If our whole being is ruled by the flesh, then we will seek after that which belongs to our natural peculiarities, that which our selfish and carnal self-will demands, as only those who are already spiritually inclined can also become spiritual-minded. The will of God, which is revealed in the law, however, not only demands that all our efforts shall be directed toward the fulfilment of His will and not toward the fulfilment of our natural self-will ; but He has also made life a condition on the former and death on the latter. That, then, after which 6

death ; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace : because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be : (8) and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ,

the natural self-will strives, through which the demands of the law are not fulfilled, is death, however unconscious man may be of the fact ; while only that which the Spirit tries to work in us is life and salvation. The
7 reason for this is simply the fact, that everything after which the flesh strives, whether we desire this end or not, is antagonistic to God ; for God demands that we are to submit to His law, and this our natural self-will is determined not to do. Nor can it do this, because only God can determine our will to submit itself to His will, and our self-will does not want to be deter-
8 mined by the will of another. Those, however, who find their life's element in their carnal self-will, cannot be pleasing to God. He must be their enemy, and for this reason death must impend over them, which is destined for all who are hostile to God. He, then, who refuses to be guided by the Spirit, without whom there can be no life, again falls under the dominion of sin and of death.

9 Ye, however,—and with these words the Apostle turns to his readers,—have not your life element in the flesh. It could indeed happen that there are those who in individual instances permit the flesh to determine their course or their life ; but in baptism they have been transferred into the life element of the Spirit, who has delivered them from the dominion of sin and of death. But this is so certain, because from henceforth the Spirit of God dwells in them. But this Spirit is none other than the Spirit of Christ ; and he who has not

he is none of his. (10) And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. (11) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies ¹ through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

¹ Many ancient authorities read *because of*.

Him is not even a Christian. For to be a Christian means to belong to Christ ; but not only to confess Him and to serve Him, but also to become one with Him. Here we see, as has been said above, that in connection with that for which the Spirit strives, life and salvation has been given for us. This can indeed become perfectly clear only at the end of our lives, when the final decision will be made as to what has been the final result of our whole course and career. If Christ dwells in us with His Spirit, then the body is 10 dead on account of sin. For the old divine order, according to which sin, which once had ruled over us, brings death, cannot and does not intend to be made of no effect redemption. But the new spiritual life which Christ has worked in us through His Spirit, cannot be done away with by death, since it carries within itself its unending permanence, and according to its real essence will always continue to be life. The old divine order also, according to which righteousness, or the state of being which is pleasing to God, brings life with itself, has not been abrogated by redemption ; on account of the righteousness that has been worked in us, life must be given to us. This life is primarily only spiritual, which we enjoy in the communion with Christ, and on which the separation of the soul from the body can have no effect. But this cannot be all. 11 The Spirit that dwells in us is the Spirit of Him who has awakened Jesus from His bodily death to his heavenly life. Then, however, He who has awakened

VIII, 12-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(12) So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; (18) for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the ¹ deeds of the

¹ Gr. *doings*.

Christ as our Mediator from the dead, will also make alive again our bodies, which have remained mortal and on account of sin have become subject to death. He will do this on account of His Spirit who dwells in us. For a body which He had deemed worthy of being the temple of His Spirit cannot be subject to death for all time. It must, as was the case with the body of Christ, be raised from the dead and be transformed to an imperishable heavenly glory.

- 12 Still from another point of view the Apostle shows that the Spirit, who works this new life in us, is at the same time the surety of the consummation of our salvation. He begins by showing that the blessed results which the presence of the Spirit within us brings about, at the same time brings a responsibility with them. But as he has shown, that the presence of the Spirit within us still leaves us free to choose, whether we will be determined by Him or by the flesh, he now states, that we are not indebted for these blessed results to the flesh, so that we could possibly by such an idea permit ourselves to live according to the flesh, i. e. be guided by our natural inclinations. For this certainly remains a fact, that if we live according to the flesh, we, according to God's ordinances, must
- 18 die. For we have already seen that all selfish endeavors that do not submit to the will of God, with absolute certainty, bring with them death. But this is the death for which there is no resurrection, as there is for spiritual death, and is accordingly what we call the everlasting death. For we can only attain to that life which the awakening of the body into a heavenly glory in the end brings with it, if we slay the customary

body, ye shall live. (14) For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (15) For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear ; but ye received the spirit of

methods of conducting our lives as these are determined by our flesh, i. e. by our natural character. However the body that has in this way been delivered from the dominion of sin becomes the temple of God, which is eventually to be raised from the dead. This killing, which we must accomplish if we would not die ourselves, can be brought about only through the power of the Spirit, whom we are obligated to permit to operate within us through the blessed results that He has promised us.

For this is the new thought that the Apostle wants 14 to develop, that this being moved by the Spirit of God, is for us the proof that we are the sons of God. Not as though through our being led by the Spirit we become the children of God. For only the children of God can receive the Spirit and can be led by Him. But as children can be recognized by their likeness to their father, thus, too, we are able to recognize the children of God by the fact that they, being led by His Spirit, become like unto Him and thereby receive all the privileges of the sons of God, and shall later participate in all of His possessions. This results from 15 the kind of Spirit which they have received in baptism. For this is not the Spirit which belongs to the condition of slavery, which would always compel us to fear the Lord. Such miserable slaves they were at one time, while they were serving their Gentile idols, merely through fear of being punished. But the Spirit which we have received is that of sonship, into which relation we were transferred when God out of grace received us as His children. And because this Spirit

VIII, 16-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (16) The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: (17) and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified with *him*.

(18) For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are

- makes us sure of the Fatherly love of God, we for this reason appeal to Him, as Jesus did, with the words, "Abba, our Father" (Mark xiv. 36). With this spiritual life of ours, which has been effected in us through the Spirit and has by Him been filled with childlike
- 16 confidence, the Spirit Himself, who invites us to be similar to Him, testifies that we are the children of God.
- 17 But if we are then children, as this double testimony of the Spirit has made us certain of, then, too, we are heirs who are sure, that some time they will have a share in the possessions of their Father. But what this signifies, to be the heirs of God, we can see in the case of Christ, who, as the Son of God, through His resurrection, has already entered upon the participation in the glory of God in His eternal and blessed life. In this glory of His we too are some day to take part together with Him, as the Spirit has promised us, since God in His Fatherly love will give us nothing less than He has given to His Son, with whom we have become co-heirs. But one thing we are to remember. If the Spirit, which we have received in the communion of life with Christ is to assure us of the future participation in His glory, then this communion with Him must be proved by the fact that we submit to those sufferings which fall to our lot, as they did to His at the hands of the world, that is hostile to God, and that we accordingly suffer willingly with Him.
- 18 That too much is not demanded, in view of the glory that awaits us, if we are to suffer with Christ, the

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. (19) For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. (20) For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but

Apostle proves by this, that, according to his conviction (which he presupposes that everybody will share), the sufferings of the present are not of equal value, i. e. are in reality altogether insignificant when compared with that glory. The chief concern is this, that we become perfectly sure of this glory, and that, as this has already been realized in the case of Christ, only its final revelation is yet to be awaited in us. For this 19 reason the Apostle proves so extensively the certain realization of this glory, and does this, first of all, from the anxious expectation of the non-human creation for the revelation of the sons of God that shall appear with this glory. For only when these have attained to their glory, as the Son of God has, will their sonship become perfectly revealed. How it comes that the Apostle postulates such an anxiety in non-human creation, he explains by a reference to the Old Testament narrative of the fall of man. If God has cursed the earth on account of man, who has sinned (Gen. iii. 17), then its present worthlessness or vanity, accord- 20 ing to which it lacks all higher and permanent value, is not its original state; and, consequently, it must necessarily be longing for the restoration of the latter. But as the creature has not through itself caused this condition, as was the case with man, who by his transgressions has voluntarily and of his free choice brought death upon himself, but as it is subject to this only on God's account, who subjected it to this in order to punish man for his sins, then this expectancy cannot be one that is without hope of realization. For if this subjection resulted as a consequence of sin, then thereby

VIII, 21-22] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

by reason of him who subjected it, ¹ in hope (21) that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (22) For we know that the whole creation groaneth and trav-

¹ Or, *in hope : because the creation, etc.*

the hope has already been given that, together with the deliverance from sin, the purpose of this subjection has been attained, and then this will be again removed. But this deliverance is only completed when the sons of God have become manifest as that which they are, by becoming participants in the glory of Christ. This is the goal of the anxious expectation of the created
21 world; and this with good reason. For the sons of God can attain to this glory only when their bodies, which through death, that has been set as a punishment for sin, have fallen into decay and thereby have become subject to a useless vanity, as is the case with the entire world of created things, have been delivered again. But this takes place only when they have attained to the glory, which has also transformed the body of Christ into an imperishable glory. But as our present bodies have in them only this same perishable character which the created world bears, then the latter, too, must be delivered from that state of servitude which is connected with this perishable condition,
22 in that it is subject to vanity and to worthlessness. In the death throes of all departing life, which could not possibly have been so appointed by God, the Apostle, with all Christians, thinks he hears a universal groaning and turning of the created world, as that of a woman in travail, which continues until now. But as the birth puts an end to the sufferings of a woman in travail, thus, too, these throes will have an end, when, as a consequence of the disappearance of the world in its present form, a transformed world form will appear and because the anxious expectation of the

aileth in pain ¹ together until now. (23) And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for *our* adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body. (24) For ² in hope were we saved : but hope that is seen is not hope : ³ for who ⁴ hopeth for that which he seeth ? (25) But if we hope for that which we see not, *then* do we with ⁵ patience wait for it.

¹ Or, *with us*.

² Or, *by*.

³ Many ancient authorities read *for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ?*

⁴ Some ancient authorities read *awaiteth*.

⁵ Or, *stedfastness*.

creature is not without hope, its present sighing and struggle is a surety of the glory that is in store for the children of God, with which this expectancy is to be fulfilled.

But we ourselves also are groaning, as well as the 23 whole created world, and that, too, not without a certain prospect that this longing will be satisfied, since we in the Spirit already possess the first-fruits of an imperishable and glorious form of life. For as this Spirit makes us sure of our sonship, this deeply significant groaning is an expression of the firm expectation for the complete installation into this state of sonship, which can only take place when this body is delivered from the curse of its perishable condition. For we have been saved for this goal of our hopes. If God has de- 24 livered us through the death of His Son from eternal destruction, He has done this only for the purpose of making us participants in all that perfect deliverance which begins when we enter upon the rights of sonship. It is true that we do not yet see this goal of our hopes ; but this lies in the nature of hope. If the object of our hope has once been seen, then it is no longer something that we hope for ; for what we already see we do not any longer hope for. We would not have any Christian hope at all, if there was not still in each an unsatisfied longing and sighing. But if there is found in the 25 life of the Christian a hoping for what is not seen, then

VIII, 27-27] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

(26) And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity : for we know not how to pray as we ought ; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered ; (27) and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, ¹ because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

¹ Or, *that*.

our expectation, too, for that goal which in the nature of the case is yet not seen, will prove itself sure of its object by enduring patience.

- 26 To this a third thing must be added. The Spirit of God which has been given to us always stands ready to help our natural and human weakness. This weakness shows itself above all in this, that, although our expectation of this goal of our hope is always naturally connected with the prayer that God would help us to attain this goal through all the dangers of our lives as Christians, we yet do not so often know what is necessary for us to do in order to attain to this desired object, and which we shall accordingly pray for. But in this case this Spirit comes to our assistance. In that groaning for which we can no longer find any expression in words, and which accordingly does not come from our conscious spiritual life, the Spirit Himself
- 27 speaks in our stead to God. But the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit intends to say with these unuttered groanings, for which there is no form of expression that the senses can grasp. For this Spirit, according to His will, appears for those who belong to Him, and for this reason God understands what He would ask for them, even if we are not able to express our thoughts to Him in words.

While in chapter v. the certainty of the consummation of our redemption was represented as based on justification, and in chapter viii. on the workings of the Holy Spirit within us, the Apostle now proceeds to show the

(28) And we know that to them that love God ¹ all things work together for good, *even* to them that are called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren : (30) and whom

¹ Some ancient authorities read *God worketh all things with them for good.*

foundation on which the certainty of our redemption rests in the divine foreordination. It is true, that we do not 28 know what we are to pray for in individual cases in order to attain to the goal of our hope ; but one thing we do know—that God, in everything that He does to us, works for our good, so that everything redounds to our salvation. True, not for all, but only for those who love Him ; but this, too, not because they love Him, but because they have before been recognized as those whom, according to His purpose, He has called to redemption. For when God formed the purpose of bringing them to redemption, He then did not choose them at random, and, as it were, by chance, but those whom He, as the Searcher of hearts, had beforehand known as those in whom His grace could work this love for Him. For in them there had long before been a longing for that which is divine, 29 without which the grace of God could not be able to bring them to redemption. Those who in this way had been foreordained, He appointed to become similar to the form of His Son, who, in His transformed body, bears in Himself the image of the Father, and in this way implants in them the full heritage of the Son of God. For in connection with the exaltation of the Son it had already been intended, that He was not to remain alone in this state of Sonship, but was to be surrounded by many of His brethren who would be born after Him. But in this case it was necessary for God to select those who were in a condition to be led to this goal. And when He called those who were predestinated to this goal, by working faith in them through 30

VIII, 31-33] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

(31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (32) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? (33) Who shall lay anything to the

the gospel, and called them into His congregation, then these, and none others, were those who had been called according to His purpose to redemption, and whom God in every particular helps to attain redemption. But if their call had already directly brought about their justification, then thereby their future glorification had been made as sure and as certain as if it had already taken place. For Paul has shown from all sides that, with the beginning of our redemptive life, at the same time, and in all cases, the certainty of the consummation of our redemption has been given.

- 81 It is true that the question arises whether the good purposes of God, which we see in our call and justification, can be frustrated in some way or other. But he answers with the counter-question, Who can be against us, if God is for us, by having determined to
- 82 bring us to redemption. He reminds us that God has, as a matter of fact, sacrificed that which was dearest to Him for us all, even for those who were unworthy of such grace, when He gave up His Son to die for our salvation. How then could He, who has already done the greatest thing for us, fail to give us, in conjunction with the gift of His grace which He has bestowed upon us in His Son, that which is necessary for the overcoming of all obstacles that would hinder our salvation? Paul pictures to himself everything that could be
- 88 undertaken in order to accomplish this. Is a person really prepared to raise accusations before His throne

charge of God's elect? ¹ It is God that justifieth; (34) who is he that condemneth? ² It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love ³ of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) Even as it is written,

¹ Or, *Shall God that justifieth?*

² Or, *Shall Christ Jesus that died. . . us?*

³ Some ancient authorities read *of God*.

against those whom God has selected for Himself in order to bring them to redemption, to prove that they are unworthy of salvation? But God Himself, who has the final deciding voice, has declared His elect just, as we have already learned. Will anybody condemn 84 them in the final judgment? But He through whom God will pass the judgment, namely, the Mediator of our redemption, Jesus, has done all things in order to deliver us from condemnation, by dying for us. But, rather, God has declared that this death has been suffered for us in order to save us, by raising Him from the dead. Indeed, He has exalted Jesus to His right hand, so that He can there intercede for us, and can on His part make His atoning death count before God as that which will always protect us from all condemnation. If we have in this way been made certain 85 of the love of God, who has done and will do everything in order to bring us to salvation, then it could only be a question who or what could hinder Him in any way from showing His love by making us unfaithful in our faith and thereby incapable of experiencing the manifestations of His love. Paul enumerates every suffering and trouble that could afflict us on account of our faith, and could possibly cause us to fall from faith, including even martyrdom by the sword, which Ps. xlviii 23 has already predicted for us. But in the contest with 86 all these dangers to our Christian life, we not only gain the victory, but more than the victory, as they must all

VIII, 37-39] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

¹ For thy sake we are killed all the day long ;

We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

(37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, (39) nor height, nor depth, nor any other ² creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹ Ps. xlv. 22.

² Or, *creation*.

tend to the strengthening of our hope. For Christ, who has given us the greatest proof of His love in His death, will certainly do everything to prevent anything from harming our faith and preventing us from experiencing the manifestation of God's love. In this way, then, Paul closes with the triumphant exultation of his fixed confidence, that nothing in the world is able to do this, neither death nor life, nor heavenly nor earthly power. When he further distinguishes what is found in the world of time and space, he adds to the former, 38 that no power in the present or in the future can harm us ; and to the latter, that nothing that is high or low nor anything else that can anywhere be found in all creation, can do this. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, which has been gained for us in the redemptive work of Christ, and is guaranteed to us in His work as the Mediator and the exalted Lord, both 39 for time and eternity.

With this Paul finishes the discussion of all that which, according to i. 16,17, constitutes the contents of his gospel, and the main contents of his epistle. Only one question yet remained to be discussed ; and of this the fourth part is to treat. It has been expressly stated in the preceding discussion that the gospel, together with the redemption that it brings, was primarily intended for the Jews. But the actual condition of affairs was not in harmony with this. Not only in

LX I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bear-

Rome was there a large congregation that had been gathered chiefly from among the Gentiles, and among whom there were only a few scattered men who had been formerly Jews, over against the large and influential Jewish contingent in that city who would have nothing to do with the gospel, and had not asked for redemption: more or less this was the case throughout the world. But as the most successful of the Apostles turned his entire zeal to Gentile mission work, then the seeming inexplicable contradiction of this state of affairs to the promises of God become only greater and greater. Indeed, it seemed as though the Apostle had lost all his love for his people, as if it was only his purpose to bring the redemption to the Gentiles, which certainly was first of all intended for the Jews. This had no doubt often been cast up to him by the Jews, and possibly also by the Jewish Christians, to whom his zeal for Gentile mission work was an offense. He does not imply that they had cast this up to him in Rome; but he cannot enter upon the discussion of the fact that his people as a whole have lost redemption, without stating how this problem was in his heart a burning question. Indeed, he cannot even decide to express this fact in cool and deliberate words. It will be- 1
come manifest soon enough what it was that caused him unspeakable suffering, and which they will scarcely believe that he endures. But in the communion of life with Christ he can speak only the truth. And that he is not lying, he proclaims with an appeal to his conscience, which convicts him of no lie, and which must give evidence to the truth, because now only the voice of his conscience is speaking as the Holy Spirit, which has been given to him, commands it to speak. But

ing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, (2) that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. (3) For I could¹ wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: (4) who are

¹ Or, *pray*.

- 2 what he asserts in so solemn a manner, because his whole life seems to be in evident contradiction to this, is the deep sorrow, the endless suffering of his heart on account of the exclusion of his people from redemption. For that he is speaking of this is seen from what follows.
- 3 So deep is his sympathy for his people that he would be willing to sacrifice his own salvation if it were possible in this way to secure salvation for his nation. He personally would be willing, if this were allowed, to become a sacrifice to the divine wrath, and accordingly suffer destruction, and in this way to be separated eternally from Christ. Whether this would be possible or permissible, he does not ask in the intensity of his unselfish love and unbounded willingness to sacrifice himself; for it is a matter that concerns the salvation of his brethren, who are closely connected
- 4 with him by the ties of blood relationship. But still further they would be worthy of this sacrifice of love. For they bear the ancient and sacred name of Israelites, and they possess all religious gifts and advantages that before Christ could be had. God has selected this people to be His child, the object of His fatherly love; and the glory of God, which in olden times went before the people through the desert in a column of clouds of fire, now yet is enthroned in the darkness of the Holy of Holies above the Cherubim in the tabernacle. God has again and again made a covenant with the people and their fathers. By solemnly giving them the law He has declared to them His will; and this people possesses a service of God that is genuine and is pleasing to God. But the other side of these covenant makings

Israelites ; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; (5) whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the ¹ flesh, who is over all, God blessed ² for ever-Amen.

(6) But it is not as though the word of God hath come to

¹ Or, *flesh ; he who is over all, God, be blessed for ever.*

² Gr. *unto the ages.*

are the promises which God in these has entrusted to the people, of which the Apostle had already spoken in iii. 2, as one of the advantages which Israel could not lose. These promises came from the fathers ; and to 5 be able to call these men fathers raises Israel high above all nations ; but still more the fact that the Messiah has come from among them, as has been promised by God, and has been sent as the Redeemer of the world to all peoples. True, only according to His flesh ; but that He was of a still higher nature, makes it a matter of the highest honor for them that according to the flesh He was of their nation. For, according to His real essence, He is divine, exalted over all others, and for that reason glorified in eternity ; which fact Paul seals with his Amen.

The Apostle denies that his complaint concerning the 6 exclusion of the greater part of Israel from redemption in any way presupposes that the word of promise, which had offered them this salvation, had ceased to be in force. He is of the conviction that the rejection of Israel as a nation by no means makes impossible the election of certain individuals from Israel unto redemption. For the prophets had at all times represented the realization of redemption in the people as preceded by a great judgment of God, in which many would be rejected and were to be excluded from redemption. Already in the earliest history of the people it has been clearly indicated, that the promises given to Israel by no means apply to every individual who is an Israelite

nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: (7) neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but ¹ In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed. (9) For this is a word of promise, ² According to this season will I come,

¹ Gen. xxi. 12.

² Gen. xviii. 10.

by descent, and that they are not void even if a larger portion of the present generation is excluded from redemption. Not because they were lineal descendants
 7 of Abraham are the children entitled to be heirs of his promises and have a claim to the promised possession of redemption. Paul appeals to Gen. xxi. 12, where it is expressly stated, that in Isaac his seed shall be called, i. e. that he alone together with his descendants is to be called the seed of Abraham, to which at all times the blessings of Abraham are promised. Thereby Ishmael, who was also a bodily descendant of Abraham, together with his descendants, was excluded from this seed of Abraham and from the possession of redemption that had been promised to him. In this word of God is to be found, according to the Apostle, the general
 8 truth, that not those children who are begotten according to the flesh are as such the children of God in the sense in which the fatherly love of God has been promised to them, but that only those children who have been begotten by virtue of the promise are to be regarded before God as the seed of Abraham, to whom in and with Abraham the redemption is to be given.
 9 Such a child of promise Isaac was, since, according to Gen. xviii. 10-14, where his birth is described as resulting from a special visitation of God, it is shown that this child had not been begotten in the natural way, which was also an impossibility on account of the age of the parents, but by a miracle of God, such as is necessary for the fulfilment of a promise. In this the

and Sarah shall have a son. (10) And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac— (11) for *the children* being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him then calleth

Apostle finds, that to-day yet the bodily descendants of Abraham as such do not attain to redemption, but only those whom the word of promise that is brought to them in the gospel, by virtue of the divine power that is contained in it, beget to be the spiritual children of Abraham (in the sense of similarity of essence), because it works in them faith, inasmuch as they have been elected by God.

Now, however, it could be said that Ishmael had not 10 been legally a full son of Abraham, but only the son of the maid. For this reason Paul cites another example, that of the sons of Rebecca, who were the sons of *one* father, namely, of Isaac, who is expressly declared to be the bearer of the promise, and of *one* mother, and seemingly had equal rights and claims. But before he cites the statement of God, which determines the future relation of the two sons, the Apostle breaks off in the sentence he has begun, in order to say what follows from the time in which this statement of God had been made to Rebecca. For at that time the children had 11 not been born, and accordingly could not have done anything good or evil. But in this Paul recognizes the purpose to establish the principle of divine election. If the determination of the future fate of these sons had been made later, then it would seem as though it had been made on the basis of their deeds, and in the same way, in later time, the determination of the individual to redemption could be dependent, if not on the birthright as such, then at any rate on a work of some sort. But as this determination took place on the basis

IX, 12-15] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(12) it was said unto her, ¹The elder shall serve the younger.

(13) Even as it is written, ²Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

(14) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, ³I will have

¹ Gen. xxv. 23.

² Mal. i. 2 f.

³ Ex. xxxiii. 19.

of divine election, it was intended that it should not be dependent on any service, through which men can earn salvation for themselves, but exclusively upon God, who has called them because of His election through the working of faith in them unto redemption. Only after
12 the Apostle has settled this purpose of God, he quotes the word of God in Gen. xxv. 23, which he interprets to mean that he who by virtue of his being born first was the greater, was to serve the less; so that not Esau, but Jacob, was to be the heir of his father, and in him, too, the nation is continued, and he has accordingly become the bearer of the promise. As the Apostle does not understand sacred history as purely external historical narrative, but as a narrative which teaches us to understand the divine councils according to the directions that are contained in them and that are intended for us, he explains this determination concerning the two sons of
1 Rebecca through Mal. i. 2, 3. The statement there made that God bestowed His love upon Jacob and withheld it from Esau, Paul does not regard as an historical description of the fate of the two sons, but we are to find in it the lesson, that it was exclusively His elective grace which determined the one to salvation and excluded the other from it, without human merit or work having had any influence in the matter.
14 The question therefore arises, whether the freedom of divine election, according to which this election is made dependent on no human work or merit, is not an injustice, since God's impartiality appears in this very fact, that He recompences each one according to his
15 deeds. Paul bases his denial of this negation to the

mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. (16) So that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh,¹ For this very pur-

¹ Ex. ix. 16.

word of God, which was given to Moses. It was impossible that God should have said anything to him, who as the mediator of the revelation of the law was to make known the standard according to which God's righteousness was to prevail, that would be contrary to His justice. Nor is there a contradiction here, because the election is not an act of His justice, but of His grace and His mercy. But it belongs to the essence of mercy, as is said in Ex. xxiii. 19, as also of compassion, upon which it is based, that it can turn to none other than to whom it does actually turn, and that it selects its own objects and in doing so is not determined by anybody or anything. For this very reason it cannot be dependent on the wishes or the strenuous efforts of any human 16 being, but on God, who applies His mercy to whom He will. He alone can then determine the conditions that He will attach to it, and in doing so is bound by no rules like those according to which justice makes requital. Paul establishes this further by showing that the opposite of mercy is also dependent on Him. Here the historical person of Pharaoh, to whom God in Ex. ix. 16 speaks, is entirely lost sight of. Only that which the Scriptures say concerning him is considered, in order to teach us in connection with him what the conduct of God is over against those upon whom He will not have mercy. The Scriptures state expressly, 17 according to the interpretation of Paul, that God had caused him to appear in history in order to manifest in this case His power, that He in all future time is to be called that One who can do such miracles. But the Apostle very accurately states the conclusion he draws

pose did I raise thee up, that I might show in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. (18) So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.

(19) Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he still find fault? For who withstandeth his will? (20) Nay but, O man,

18 from this. Not perchance this, that God had created some human beings in order to predestinate them to destruction, or even that He has determined that some few among men, since they are all sinners, shall be destroyed. As God selects those to whom He intends to show mercy, in this way He seeks out those whom He intends to harden in their sins, just as at present He has hardened Israel in the sin of unbelief. That Pharaoh had committed grievous sins everybody knew from Ex. ix. 34, 35; but there were many others who had sinned as grievously as he, and possibly worse. The fact that He hardened him in his sins is to be explained on the ground that He intended to show His power in the end which he and his sins attained. In the same way He will want to show His mercy in the case of him upon whom He has compassion. But in reference to the question why He exhibits this power in the case of the one and His mercy in the case of the other, the Apostle says nothing. He indeed says that the
19 objection will be raised to his exposition, why God then upbraids him whom He Himself has hardened in his sins, as nobody can resist His will, according to which this person persists in his sins; but this question, too,
20 he does not answer. All he does is to make the person who raises this question feel how little it is proper for him in his low estate to raise such objections to God in His exaltation. In a picture that has been taken from Is. xxix. 16 he illustrates, how unthankful it would be that a vessel should say to him who has formed it:

who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus? (21) Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? (22) What if God, ¹ willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much

¹ Or, *although willing*.

Why hast thou made me as I am? He intends thereby to confirm, that it is not at all the right thing for a creature to call its Creator to account. The same is 21 true of the further development of this picture. Without a doubt the potter has the absolute right over the clay out of which he is making a vessel. He can make out of the clay he has kneaded vessels for honorable use and those for unclean work. It certainly follows from this that the Creator has the absolute right to determine the fate of His creatures according to His own will. But Paul does refer to the right of God by virtue of His creation in order on this ground to explain the difference in His dealings with Moses and with Pharaoh, but for the purpose of showing that quarreling with God on this account is something entirely improper and contrary to our relation to God. If God has in any place or case made use of this right he does not say; and in what follows, where he places the actual conduct of God in the sharpest possible antithesis to the right which has been accorded to God in this general discussion, it is made entirely impossible that He ever did.

But what is to be said if God has not done as He had 22 a right to do by virtue of the fact that He is the Creator? The concluding sentence, according to which all criticism must be hushed, the Apostle purposely suppresses, because he never and under no circumstances concedes the right to man to this criticism. What now has God done? The Apostle first states that God has

longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction: (23)
¹and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon

¹ Some ancient authorities omit *and*.

by no means given up His purpose of revealing His wrath, which would punish all sins, nor His power, which could punish them. He has merely reserved these for the great day of judgment, and in the meanwhile he has endured with great long-suffering those who have incurred His anger. Such long-suffering has only the purpose of waiting to see if they will suffer themselves to be converted, and presupposes that Paul is not thinking of vessels which God has created for His wrath, but of those who through their unbelief and impenitence have called down upon themselves the wrath of God. These are the unbelieving Jews, who have long since been ripe for condemnation, and upon whom God has not yet sent the merited judgment of wrath, in order to give them time for repentance. This, however, does not make impossible the judgment of a hardening, that has come over them. But this, too, for
28 another reason. If the final judgment had come at once, as soon as Israel as a whole had shown itself to be unbelieving, then only the smallest number would have been saved, namely, those who had become believers out of Israel. God, however, intended to show how great, i. e. how incomprehensive the riches of His glory is, which is to be manifested in the vessels of His mercy. But such were not only to be found in Israel, but also in the Gentile world. But naturally these were not persons who had merited His mercy, as the unbelievers in Israel had merited His wrath, for, as has been shown above, it is not possible at all to earn mercy. Not by their willingness and efforts did they make themselves the vessels of mercy, but God has chosen them and has prepared them by His prevenient

vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, (24) *even* us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? (25) As he saith, also in Hosea,

¹ I will call that my people, which was not my people;
And her beloved, which was not beloved.

(26) ² And it shall be, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people,

There shall they be called sons of the living God.

(27) And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, ³ If the number of

¹ Hos. ii. 23.
² Is. x. 22 f.

³ Hos. i. 10.

grace for the glory, which He intended to give to them. But now, by the patient postponement of His judgment, He had at the same time, too, created the possibility for the calling of both the Jews and the Gentiles. For 24 now He can send out His messengers into all the world, who through His gospel work the faith in the vessels of mercy, and thus have called many into His congregation not only from the Jews, of whom large numbers became believers, but also from the Gentiles. The Apostle has before demonstrated that it does not contradict the word of God if God selects for Himself out of Israel according to His free grace those whom He intends to lead to salvation, and to harden the others. He now further proves that if He, as a matter of fact, has borne the hardened part of Israel in great long-suffering, and has given them time to repent in order to secure room for the calling of many from Israel and also from the Gentiles, that this actual conduct on His part is entirely in harmony with His pre- 25 dictions. In the passage, Hosea ii. 23, Paul finds it indicated that in the future time God will call the Gentiles, who were not His people, and not the objects of His love, as Israel was, to be a nation of His love; just as in Hosea ii. 1, that in the Christian congregations, Gen- 26 tiles, too, who were formerly not considered as belonging to His people, will be called His children. In the 27

the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved: (28) for the Lord will execute *his* word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short. (29) And, as Isaiah hath said before,

¹ Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed,

We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.

(30) What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even

¹ Is. i. 9.

same way it is said in Is. x. 27, that from among the great number of Israelites, only a small remnant that are left will be saved; and that thus the word of God's
28 promise concerning Israel, because His justice, according to which He excluded those Israelites who had remained in their unbelief, will be accomplished only to a
29 limited extent. But even then he finds fulfilled what has been predicted in Is. i. 9, namely, that if God's mercy had not in that time of waiting provided for this, that a seed should yet remain out of which, so to say, a new Israel was to come forth, the entire people would have perished in the final judgment, as did the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. So then, even if things should continue as they now are in Israel, the promise of God would nevertheless not become of no effect.

30 But before the Apostle proceeds to show that things cannot remain as they are in Israel, he asks the question, What is now to be said in reference to the reason that things have come to be as they are? This he does to expose the guilt of Israel, on account of which the greater portion of the nation has been excluded from redemption, while the Gentiles have been called to receive it. For the very reason that the Gentiles did not strive after righteousness, they have without their knowledge or effort attained to a righteousness, although this is not a righteousness that could be secured

the righteousness which is of faith : (31) but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law. (32) Wherefore? ¹ Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling; (33) even as it is written,

¹ Or, *Because, doing it, not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled.*

through any human works whatever, but one which is attained on the basis of confidence in salvation, and hence by abstaining from all claims and merits of man. Intentionally the Apostle does not set up in antithesis 81 to this that Israel, as a whole, have been striving after righteousness; for if they had done this in the right spirit, they would then have secured it. It was their wrong that they wanted to determine of themselves according to which order righteousness was to be attained; and as a consequence they did not attain at all to such an order, and accordingly to no righteousness. For it is found in the nature of the case, that we can- 82 not ourselves determine the order according to which God will pronounce us just, but that we must accept in faith what God causes to be announced according to the manner in which this is to be done. But they always insisted that this order must be based on works, and that everything depended on knowing upon which services God makes this righteousness dependent. And when it was announced to them that God has conditioned it upon no human service, but solely on the redemptive death of Christ, if we put our confidence in Him this became to them a rock of offense over which they stumbled, i. e. they were thereby caused to become unbelievers, because this was in contradiction to all their prejudices. But in exactly this way it had 83 been predicted. In Is. xxviii. 16, Paul finds, connecting this statement with Is. viii. 14, that God has Himself laid down such a rock, at which they could stumble and become erring in their faith, but upon which

¹ Behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence :

And he that believeth on ² him shall not be put to shame.

X Brethren, my heart's ³ desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. (2) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. (3) For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject them-

¹ Is. xxviii. 16.

² Or, *it*.

³ Gr. *good pleasure*.

they could also establish their faith. But He has also declared that he whose faith rests upon this rock shall not be put to shame. If they had then placed their confidence upon this rock, then they would have attained to the norm, according to which righteousness is bestowed, and thereby, too, righteousness itself ; whereas now they have secured neither. The renewal of his affectionate address to the Gentile Christian reader, shows that the Apostle's warm sympathy for his people has not diminished his fraternal love for them. For he indeed feels bound to state that the
1 pleasure of his heart and his petitions to God for his nation are directed toward their deliverance from destruction, although he knows full well why this pur-
2 pose cannot be attained at present. For he is willing to acknowledge that their efforts toward their attainment of this goal proceed from a zeal for God, whom they think they cannot serve except by gaining His good pleasure through the works of the law. But for this very reason their zeal is not in accordance with the true knowledge of God and of His will. Paul intentionally does not decide whether their lack of knowledge of the righteousness, which God imparts, is their
3 own fault or not. The fact of the matter is, that they under all circumstances strive to make a self-acquired righteousness count. And for this reason they are not willing to subject themselves to that divinely-

selves to the righteousness of God. (4) For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth. (5) For Moses¹ writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby. (6) But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, ²Say not in thy heart, Who

¹ Lev. xviii. 5.

² Dt. xxx. 12. f.

given righteousness, which alone God is willing to recognize as the kind that is pleasing in His sight, and which He demands that they shall accept. This was the guilt of Israel, on account of which it does not attain to righteousness, and with this also to redemption, and cannot attain to these.

The Apostle now proceeds to show the far-reaching significance of this guilt on the part of Israel. For the appearance of Christ as the Mediator of redemption has put an end to all legal means of attaining to salvation. From now on there shall be righteousness for 4 every one who believes, but not for him who seeks to attain it in a legal way. For this reason their zeal for God is unreasonable, because it strives through their own righteousness and not by subjection to the new order to attain this righteousness which He has established as pleasing to Him. The righteousness that proceeds from the law and that which comes from faith are irreconcilable antitheses. The former is described in Lev. xviii. 5. In it everything depends 5 upon deeds, if man is to live on its bases. As Paul is not able to set up against this any word of Christ, in which He describes the righteousness of faith, he permits this righteousness to describe itself, and that in the sacred words of the Scriptures taken from Deut. xxx. 12-14. You are not to say in your heart, i.e. 6 think, that there is need of supernatural efforts to attain this righteousness. Do you think it is necessary to ascend to heaven in order to search for it? This would be the same as wishing to bring Christ down.

shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down): (7) or, who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) (8) But what saith it? ¹ The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: (9) ² because if thou shalt ³ confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: (10)

¹ Dt. xxx. 14.² Or, *that*.³ Some ancient authorities read *confess the word with thy mouth, that Jesus is Lord*.

But as surely as He has already descended, so surely righteousness, too, has already been secured. Do you
7 think it is necessary for this purpose to descend into the lower regions? This would mean as much as bringing Christ back from the dead. But as surely as He has already been raised from the dead, so surely too, the righteousness which has been earned for us through His death is already present. The righteousness of faith not only forbids to ask anxiously who
8 would in such impossible ways secure this righteousness for us, but it explains, that the word concerning this righteousness is near enough for our lips and for our hearts. For now the Apostle declares openly, that he interprets what in the Scripture is said concerning the law as referring to the word of faith, concerning what he and his associates proclaim, that through it righteousness is attained. What is said there of being
9 near to the mouth, he interprets to mean that everything depends on recognizing Jesus as the divine Lord; and what is said there about being near to the heart, signifies the faith in this, that God has raised Jesus from the dead, by which act He has been exalted to be our Lord. Now it is clear, that there is no need of any efforts on our part to secure redemption, but rather that it is necessary to confess with the mouth the word that has been proclaimed to us through the
10 Apostolic preaching and to believe it with the heart, in order to be delivered from destruction and to be

for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, ¹ Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. (12) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek : for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him : (13) for, ² Whosoever shall call upon the

¹ Is. xxviii. 16.

² Joel ii. 32.

saved. As the Apostle again gives the reason why he refers the being near to the mouth to confession, and the being near to the heart, to faith, he secures for himself the opportunity to transpose the order which has been given only in the words of the Scriptures into their logical order. For with the heart men believe in order thereby to attain to righteousness ; and with the mouth they confess in order by such proof of faith to attain deliverance. But in order to emphasize the 11 decisive significance, which thereby is assigned to faith, he again refers to the passage of Scripture cited above, namely, Is. xxviii. 16, which promises this redemption to *everybody* who places his confidence upon Christ. For thereby it is said, that the people of the law also, who are still seeking to secure redemption by the way of the law, shall find it only in faith. For in reference to the attainment of redemption, as is the case in regard to the need of redemption (cf. iii. 9) there is no difference 12 between the Jew and the Greek, because one and the same person, namely, Christ, concerning whom the passage in Isaiah speaks, is the Lord of all. In this lies the fact that He is rich enough to give to all who call upon Him in faith whatever they need, be they Jews or Gentiles, from the abundance of salvation. He bases this on the passage Joel iii. 5, so well 13 known to his readers, which Paul appropriates directly and applies to Christ. If according to this passage every one who calls upon His name is saved, then it is

name of the Lord shall be saved. (14) How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, ¹ How beautiful are the feet of them that bring ² glad tidings of good things!

(16) But they did not all hearken to the ³ glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, ⁴ Lord, who hath believed our report? (17) *cometh* of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (18) But I say, did they not hear? Yea, verily,

¹ Is. lli. 7. ² Or, a gospel. ³ Or, gospel. ⁴ Is. liii. 1.

clear why the Jews, who have taken offense at Christ instead of calling upon Him, and who strive to attain redemption in their self-chosen way, cannot attain redemption.

That the Jews are without excuse in not calling upon Christ as their only Saviour, the Apostle undertakes to prove from the fact that everything had been given to them that could induce them to do this. It is true that we can call upon Christ only if we believe on Him, but we cannot believe on Him if we have not heard of Him; nor can we hear of Him, unless the message has been sent to us. Naturally this had to be a message sent to us formally by an appointed messenger. But in the passage Is. lii. 7, the prophet already cries out exultingly in spirit, because of the presence of the messenger who is to bring this joyful news. The trouble is, that not all have accepted this good news. Paul in this connection is thinking of his unfortunate nation, concerning whom Isaiah had already lamented (Is. liii. 1): Lord, who hath believed our report? In this lamentation it is clearly enough shown that such preaching should produce faith. But now the joyful message of to-day has gone out by an express command of Christ, which commands faith, and only unbelief can refuse to listen to it. The Apostle places before him-

¹ Their sound went out into all the earth,
And their words unto the ends of ² the world.

(19) But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith,

³ I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation,

With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.

(20) And Isaiah is very bold and saith,

⁴ I was found of them that sought me not;

I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.

¹ Ps. xix. 4.

² Gr. *the inhabited earth*.

³ Dt. xxxii. 21.

⁴ Is. lxxv. 1.

self in the form of a question everything that could perchance excuse his people on account of this disobedience. It could perhaps be possible that this message of joy had not been brought to them. But it is expressly stated in Ps. xix. 9, that this message has gone out over the whole earth, and to the uttermost ends thereof. How then could it have failed to reach this people? The Apostle naturally has not in mind the Jews of Palestine, from the midst of whom the message of redemption had come, but the Jews who were scattered all over the world, especially those who are in the metropolis of the world, where the Jews had so decidedly refused to accept the message concerning Christ. Or it could perhaps be said that Israel had not understood the message. But Moses, with whom the Scriptures began, was also the first to refute this objection. In the passage Deut. xxxii. 21, he tells how God would 19 arouse the prophet's jealousy on account of a nation that had no understanding, by giving that grace to the latter. Then certainly this people must have heard and accepted His message of redemption, through which He offered Himself to them. But if a people that were so far without understanding as not even to be called a nation, could understand this, how then could Israel have failed to understand? Isaiah even ventures 20 to tell his people, who were jealous of their advantages

(21) But as to Israel he saith, ¹ All the day long did I spread out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people.

XI I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid - For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the

¹ Is. lxx. 2.

concerning the surrounding Gentile nations, who did not even seek God or ask concerning Him, that God was to be found among the latter and had been revealed to them. (lxx. 1). But then He must have revealed Himself to them through His message of redemption, and they must have understood this. How then could it be possible that Israel did not understand it, of whom it could not be denied that they sought God in His word, and are the
21 only one among the nations to ask for His revelation? But this very people of Israel, the prophet, in lxx. 2, describes as a rebellious and stubborn people. In this way they had not been obedient to the message which Jesus sent to them, and which demanded that it be accepted by them. Thus they have resisted what this message declared to them concerning the way to salvation and hence it was their own fault, and deeply seated in the character of this people, that they did not attain to salvation. They had no pretext on which to excuse themselves. They had brought down upon themselves their own doom.

1 The hardening of Israel was accordingly the punishment of their inexcusable guilt. But the Apostle in what preceded has at various times spoken, as though the nation as such had brought upon itself this doom, and for this reason could not attain to redemption. Here this must be explained further by showing that it was impossible that God had rejected the people whom He had chosen as His possession. As proof of this the Apostle can point to Himself, whose purely Israelitish descent showed that the whole people had

tribe of Benjamin. (2) God did not cast off his people which he foreknew. Or know ye not what the scripture ¹saith ²of Elijah? how he pleaded with God against Israel: (3) Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. (4) But what ³saith the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. (5) Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (6) But if it is by grace, it is no more of works:

¹ 1 K. xiv. 10.

² Or, in. Comp. Mk. 12. 26.

³ 1 K. xix. 18.

Not been rejected. For how could this have been possible? 2
God had certainly known this nation before He selected it, just as He knows every individual 3
whom He elects (cf. viii. 28). How could He now, when the people had only manifested their well-known peculiarities all at once reject them, as though He had been mistaken in them? This only appeared to be the case in connection with the story of Elias (cf. 1 Kings, 4
xix. 14-18). The prophet came before God with his 5
accusations against Israel, to the effect that they had slain all His prophets and were now trying to kill him, too, who was the only one left. At that time it seemed that the entire nation had fallen away from God, except one man. But he was informed that God had reserved for Himself, i. e. for His service and property, seven thousand, whom He had selected for Himself, 6
and by His preserving grace had protected them against falling into idolatry, into which He permitted the others to lapse. This was exactly the present condition of affairs. A number have been preserved who were not 5
to lose redemption. As in olden times from among the sons of the patriarchs, so God had at the present time selected from the mass of the people out of free grace those whom He had called to His salvation. The Apostle expressly states what is meant by saying that the grace of God had elected them for its purpose. This excluded the thought that they had been elected on 6

otherwise grace is no more grace. (7) What then? That which Israel seeketh for, that he obtained not; but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened: (8) according as it is written, ¹ God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day. (9) And David saith,

¹ Is. xxix. 10; Dt. xxix. 4.

account of any services in preference to the rest, because their grace would then cease to be grace. On the other hand, if they had been elected on the ground of their services, then grace would be impossible. For, otherwise, the service would be no genuine service, if they received their reward only from grace. The situation was this, then, that Israel as a whole had not
7 attained what it was striving after. For it had been striving, and was still striving, to attain a self-righteousness as a result of works. But those who had been elected had attained what they were striving for. Because God had recognized them as those who would not in their stubbornness reject His grace. He had chosen them in order by calling them to awaken that faith in them which alone could save. As for the others He had not only suffered them to go their own way, but had hardened their hearts and left them to their self-righteousness, so that they could no longer be changed. This is the divine judgment of hardening, concerning which the Old Testament often speaks. Those who for so long *would* not listen to the offers of grace made by
8 God, are now no longer to be *able* to hear. As it were, a deadening spirit has come over them, as we read in Deut. xxix. 4, so that their eyes no longer see nor their
9 ears hear. When David says, in Ps. lxix. 23, 24, that the table at which the banquet will be destructive to them, as the snare and the trap to wild animals, the Apostle interprets this as referring to the law with its service of works, in which men sought their satisfaction

¹ Let their table be made a snare, and a trap,
And a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them :
(10) Let their eyes be darkened. that they may not see,
And bow thou down their back always.

(11) I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid : but by their ²fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. (12) Now if their fall is the

¹ Ps. lxi. 32 f.

² Or, trespass. Comp. ch. 5. 25 f.

and their redemption, and which for this very reason turned out to be their destruction. With great emphasis, however, the Apostle closes with the words : "as a recompense to them." It is the just recompense for the stubbornness of their self-righteousness that they can no more see on which way alone they can attain righteousness ; so that henceforth they must constantly bend their backs under the yoke of the slavery of the 10 law.

Here the Apostle himself suggests the question for what purpose things had become as they were, in order to explain in the answer the redemptive purposes of God in the hardening of Israel. It is true that they 11 stumbled as a result of their guilt ; but if God has through His judgment of hardening made their disobedience permanent, it could not thereby have been His purpose that they should for all time be destroyed. For it was a fact, as is again and again shown in the Acts (cf. Acts xiii. 46, xxviii. 26 sqq.), that the Apostle who had been called by God to labor among the Gentiles turned with his gospel to the Gentiles when the Jews in their unbelief rejected it. In this way their mistake resulted in the Gentiles receiving redemption. But the purpose of God is thereby to incite the stubborn Jews to follow this example, so that at last His judgment of hardening could again be removed. But if in this way 12 the mistake of the Jews, who had refused to believe, was the reason why a world that had been hostile to

riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? (13) But I speak to you that are Gentiles, Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; (14) if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *them that are* my flesh, and may save some of them. (15) For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them* be, but life from the dead? (16) And if the firstfruit is holy so is the lump: and

God had attained the riches of redemption, and if their loss of redemption had brought in the riches of the Gentiles, how much more would the fulfilment of what they had discarded, the restoration of their loss by the full attainment of redemption, produce such riches for the entire Gentile world? The Apostle tells this to the Romans, because they were formerly heathens.

- 13 It is true that, as the Apostle of the Gentiles, he is doing everything by fidelity and zeal to glorify the service in their case, which God had entrusted to him; but in this he still had the ulterior purpose, if perchance he could thereby excite his own people to imitate this example, that in this way some may be saved. For if their present rejection has already had this blessed result, that a world totally estranged from God should become reconciled to Him,—how great would the blessing be which, with their return, would be imparted to the whole world? For, with the final conversion of Israel, the confirmation of redemption was to come, beginning with the resurrection of the dead.

Here the Apostle seemingly repeats himself, but only for the purpose of setting forth an image by which he can draw an earnest admonition for the believers from among the Gentiles and a great comfort for the Israelites who have become believers. Just as the consecration of the first-fruits to God, according to the ritual order, causes the whole lump of dough to be conse-

if the root is holy, so are the branches. (17) But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them ¹ of the root of the fatness of the olive tree ; (18) glory not over the branches : but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee. (19) Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. (20) Well ; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou stand-

¹ Many ancient authorities read *of the root and of the fatness*.

crated ; in the same way, according to the order of nature, which produces only like from like, the root imparts the consecration unto God to the branches of the tree, out of which they grow forth. This second example shows directly what Paul is aiming at. If God had selected the patriarchs and had consecrated them to be His property, then as a matter of course all the members of the nation that descended from them would partake of this advantage. It could happen, as actually 17 had occurred, that a part of these members would be cast aside, and in their place Gentiles be called to become the people of God, just as unfruitful branches are broken off and branches of a wild olive tree grafted in. However in this case the branches of the wild olive are not intended to bring new strength to the aging olive tree, but the Gentiles shall participate in all the blessings of Israel, which were destined for the latter 18 on account of their origin from the root of the patriarchs. But the believers from the Gentiles, since they were branches that had been grafted in, are not to be elated above the branches, i. e. the bodily members of the people of Israel who had descended from the fathers ; for they are to remember, that the roots bear the branches, and not vice versa, and that this is applicable to the branches that have been grafted in, as also of the natural branches. True, the Gentile Christians might 19 say, that at all events certain branches had been broken 20

est by thy faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: (21) for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee. (22) Behold then the goodness and severity of God toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. (23) And they also, if they continue not

off in order to make room for those that were grafted in but all the same they had been broken off on account of their unbelief, and the latter had taken their place on account of their faith. They were not to be proud but were to fear; for all pride is based on self-satisfaction and endangers faith, because confidence in redemption is based on the consciousness of one's own helplessness. If they then in this way lost their faith, there were yet reasons to fear, that God, who has not spared the natural branches, would still less spare those 21 branches that had only been grafted in. For this reason they were to study closely the goodness of God, and also His strictness, as He had exhibited these in His past dealings with them. The severity was shown in the case of the branches that had been broken off, which had now been cast aside and had fallen upon the ground, where they, being severed from the tree, must wither; but the goodness is shown in their own case, which indeed was conditioned by this, that they abide in this goodness, i. e. without self-satisfaction or self-righteousness, and trust to God's grace alone, which was to bring them redemption. If they failed to do this, they would fall into the same unbelief on account of which the natural branches had been broken off, and for this reason would be cut off just as these had been. 22 It is now clear what the Apostle really meant by this image of the olive tree, by which he represented the redemptive communion of Israel. If the perma- 23 nency of the Gentile Christians in this communion de-

their unbelief, shall be grafted in : for God is able to graft them in again. (24) For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree ; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?
 (25) For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this

Depended upon their adherence to the faith, then the fact that the present unbelieving Jews had been excluded could only depend upon their obstinate unbelief. But even the divine judgment of hardening did not force them into this. This only had the purpose, through the call to the Gentiles, to incite them to imitation and to give them a new impetus to break with their self-righteousness, which had led to their exclusion from redemption, and to the desire for redemption in humility. If this took place, then God was powerful enough to engraft again even those branches that had been broken off. Indeed, humanly speaking, this would be easier than what He had done. If He was compelled 24 to cut off branches which by their nature belonged to a wild olive tree and contrary to nature graft them into a domestic olive tree, this certainly appeared much harder than to take branches which by nature belong to the domestic olive tree and which for some reason or other had been broken off, and again graft them upon their own tree, where they had originally grown. This return of those Jews who had become unbelievers and hardened and had forfeited redemption, which is the final purpose which God had in calling the Gentiles in their place, is not only possible, but is even something throughout in accordance with the nature of things.

What the Apostle has said concerning the possibility and relative facility of Israel's restoration, he now proceeds to establish upon the prophetic certainty which had been given to him concerning the final conversion of all Israel. He does not want his brethren from 25

mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in ; (26) and so all Israel shall be saved : even as it is written,

¹ There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer ;

He shall turn away ² ungodliness from Jacob :

(27) ³ And this is ⁴ my covenant unto them,

When I shall take away their sins.

(28) As touching the ⁵ gospel, they are enemies for your sake :

¹ Is. lix. 20 f. ² Gr. *ungodlinesses*. ³ Is. xxvii. 9. ⁴ Gr. *the covenant from me*. ⁵ See ch. 10. 15, 16, and marginal notes on ch. I. 1.

among the Gentiles to be in ignorance concerning this secret that has been divinely revealed to him, and which had for him as a genuine Israelite a still deeper significance. For they are not to deem themselves wise in themselves, as though the nation which had crucified Jesus was to remain hardened for all time. The hardening of which Paul speaks had only come upon a part of Israel, and only for a certain time, until the totality of the Gentiles should have entered into the congregation of the redeemed. The Apostle is naturally thinking only of the Gentile world as a whole, which does not say that individuals among them were not to continue in unbelief, and therefore not to enter. However, 26 the Apostle intentionally omits to say this here. In consequence of the retroactive influence of this fact upon Israel which was in the mind of God from the beginning, when He called the Gentiles, and which will ultimately break the ban of their stubbornness, all Israel will be saved. Here it becomes perfectly clear that the Apostle is thinking of the redemption of Israel as a nation, however many individuals in it may yet continue in unbelief, since Paul expressly appeals for his purpose to Is. lxix. 20, 21, where the prophet speaks only of the deliverance of nations as such from sin, and of the new 27 covenant of grace and forgiveness which God is there- 28 by effecting. In view of the gospel that they had once

but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. (29) For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. (30) For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, (31) even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they may also now obtain mercy. (32) For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

rejected, God was compelled to regard the Jews as His enemies, and to treat them as such by hardening them, and thereby deprive them of redemption, in order to give this to the Gentiles. But in accordance with the election, which pertained to the entire people of Israel, they continued to be the objects of his love on account of the fathers, in whom He had chosen the people. For the gifts of God's grace, which He has given to 29 Israel, are not to be repented of, and especially not His calling the people unto redemption. The fundamental sin of the Gentiles in pre-Christian times was their disobedience to God. But as Israel now in the 80 same way in disobedience had become hardened against the demands of faith, mercy had thereby been imparted to the Gentiles; God has caused the gospel that Israel rejected to be proclaimed to the Gentiles. But in the 81 same way, the unbelieving Jews, through this hardening that had been put upon them, had become permanently the victims of disobedience, so that they did not receive redemption as a result of their own merit or on account of their descent from the fathers, but only by the same grace which He had in mercy shown to the Gentiles. In this way God had brought it about, that the call of Israel finally did realize its goal. He had 82 included the unbelieving Jews, as also the unbelieving Gentiles, together in disobedience as in a prison, from which they could not escape. For He had given up the

(33) O the depth ¹ of the riches ² both of the wisdom and ~~the~~ knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, ~~and~~ his ways past tracing out! (34) For who hath known ~~the~~ mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? (35) ~~Or~~ who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed un~~to~~ him again? (36) For of him, and through him, and unto him~~s~~, are all things. To him *be* the glory ³ for ever. Amen.

¹ Or, *of the riches and the wisdom, etc.*
² Gr. *unto the ages.*

³ Or, *both of wisdom, etc.*

Gentiles to absolute moral indifference, and had hardened the Jews in their hostility to the gospel, so that both of them could be delivered only through the free
 33 grace of God. For this reason the Apostle closes with a doxology on the unsearchable depth of the riches of divine grace, which is rich enough to give redemption to both heathen and Jews. But just so unsearchable are also His wisdom and His knowledge, which, notwithstanding the seeming frustration of His redemptive purposes by the Jews, making it impossible that redemption should be given to them, yet can find ways and means in the end to bestow salvation upon Israel also as a people together with the Gentiles, even if this be only after the latter. For this reason the Apostle glorifies the unsearchable nature of His judgments, which appeared in times past in the revelations of God's wrath over the Gentiles, and subsequently in the hardening of Israel. And he dwells with exultation upon the fact that His ways are past finding out, upon which He in the end has brought
 34 both Jew and Gentile to this goal. He bases this on a reference to Is. xl. 13, according to which, because nobody had been His counsellor, nobody had learned His mind, in which He determined how He would attain His purpose; and to Job xli. 2, according to which He is rich enough to need nothing at the hands
 35 of anybody. For just because God, without man's ad-
 36 vice and man's assistance accomplishes all things

XII I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy ¹acceptable to God, *which* is your ²spiritual ³service. (2) And be not fashioned according to this ⁴world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is ⁵the good and ⁶acceptable and perfect will of God.

¹ Gr. *well-pleasing*. ² Gr. *belonging to the reason*.

³ Or, *worship*.

⁴ Or, *age*.

⁵ Or, *the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect*.

⁶ Gr. *well-pleasing*.

everything has in Him its origin, its eternal Mediator, and its highest goal. The doxology of God, according to which for this reason the honor that is due Him is to be given Him in all eternity, the Apostle seals with his Amen.

Upon the evidence of God's grace thus furnished, the 1 Apostle in the fifth part of his Epistle intends to base his admonitions. For to Him who has done so much for us, we are obliged to submit ourselves altogether, both body and soul. Only in this way can we consecrate our bodies as thanksgiving sacrifices for His mercies, as a living sacrifice only if we henceforth use all members of the body to serve God effectively; and also as holy sacrifices in so far as the body is to be left untouched by any contamination that would make it unsuited for the service of God; and also as an acceptable sacrifice, because God is glorified by such service. Such a sacrifice of the body is a service of God, which 2 does not consist in the thoughtless exercise of ceremonies, but is based on the reasonable consideration of what God demands of us. This result as a matter of course is that they dare not conform their whole method of life to the present world epoch, the character of which is naturally contrary to God; and as they, having formerly been Gentiles, more or less show the evidence of this in their way of living, they are constantly to correct this. But this is only possible if

(3) For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.
(4) For even as we have many members in one body, and all

they, above all things, regenerate their reasons that have been given to them as the organ for discovering the will of God, and which had lost the power to do this in their former heathen career. Thus it now is able really to learn what the will of God is, which alone is wholesome, absolutely satisfactory, and morally perfect.

At the very outset the admonition to Christian modesty shows this demand of perfect renewal of the natural mind, which naturally is characterized by
8 pride. The Apostle does not wish to express this admonition as emanating from himself, but only by virtue of the grace that has been given him. But for this reason it is intended for all, no matter how great abilities they have. Nobody in thinking of himself shall go beyond the measure of what he can justly think of himself; but everybody is to direct his mind to a wholesome, careful and measured estimation of self, which corresponds to that measure of faith which God has given to each one. As every gift of God can be received only in reliance upon the divine grace, the measure of abilities depends entirely upon the measure of faith ; and, as faith is absolutely a gift of grace, it is clear how little abilities of any sort give ground for the overestimation of self. But modesty in the estimation of self is deeply rooted in the character of the Christian congregation, as such, which can be illustrated in the
4 character of the bodily organization. We have in the one body many members. Of all of them it is true that no two have the same work or the same functions, and

the members have not the same office: (5) so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. (6) And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of our faith; (7) or ministry, *let us give ourselves* to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; (8) or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting; he that giveth, *let him do it* with ¹liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

¹ Gr. *singleness*.

that the one is always limited by the other. Just the 5 same is the case in the Christian congregation, in which the many individuals constitute one organic whole, as they all share the communion of life with Christ. But in this case every individual is a member of this body, which with its special functions is to serve all the others, and accordingly finds its limitations in the virtues of the others. These gifts are of different 6 kinds, but all are alike in this, that they are all given and with the grace that comes with the call into the congregation, and are intended for the service of the congregation. By this fact all claim to superiority is cut off. Paul needs not to speak of the highest of these gifts, the Apostolic; for of this he has before stated, that upon it all his exhortations to the congregation are based. Concerning the prophetic gift it is especially clear, that it can be given only according to the measure of the faith which one has received; for the spirit that inspires the prophet is given only on the understanding that it is worked in us by faith. In the same way 7 every gift of service in the outward affairs of the congregation is based on the ability which has been given for such service. In this way the teacher in his activity has the gift of teaching. He who has the gift of exhortation, the same in his exhortation. But what- 8 ever may be these useful activities, they are all based

(9) Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. (10) In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another; (11) in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving ¹ the Lord; (12) rejoicing in hope; patient in

¹ Some ancient authorities read *the opportunity*.

on special virtues, which must be given to the individuals, so that they may use them in a proper manner; thus charity, in the simplicity that is free of all selfish and ambitious ends; the rulership, in whatever circles it may be exercised with tireless zeal, and the exercise of mercy, in a joyful, friendly spirit, which really does good in case of any kind of suffering.

An exhortation to love and to all kinds of Christian virtues is to be found in the following passage, wherein the Apostle describes the new character of Christians in their dealings with one another. The basis of these
9 dealings is of course love; and this can only be without hypocrisy, when it comes from the heart and does not only outwardly claim what is not inwardly present. True love, which seeks the highest good of a neighbor, shows its abhorrence of the evil that is in him,
10 and only follows the good that he shows. In their brotherly love the Christians regard each other as kindred who by nature love each other dearly. This includes the principle by which each one shows the other all the honor and the recognition due him, and that each tries to surpass the other in doing this, in order to spur his neighbor to do the same. In a free flow of thought this brings the Apostle to speak of those who officially and in their special vocation occupy
11 prominent positions and are accordingly not slow in zeal, but by the Holy Ghost are incited to work diligently. In this they serve the Lord, and at the same time this keeps them within the bounds of self-restraint
12 and preserves them from self-willed action. In troub-

tribulation ; continuing stedfastly in prayer ; (13) communicating to the necessities of the saints ; ¹given to hospitality. (14) Bless them that persecute you ; bless, and curse not. (15) Rejoice with them that rejoice ; weep with them that weep. (16) Be of the same mind one toward another. Set

¹ Gr. *pursuing*.

lous times this zeal will not lag, because the Christian is always joyous in hope, patient in suffering and continuous in prayer, and this instantly gives him new strength. At this point the Apostle returns to his principal theme. Because in connection with his fellow Christians, he is dealing with those who belong to God, the Christian sympathizes with them in their needs, and provides for them as though they were his own. He not only shows them hospitality, but zealously seeks for every opportunity to practise this virtue. The sudden transition to the direct admonition is probably to be explained on the ground that the Apostle is thinking of the word of the Lord in Matt. v. 44 ; Luke vi. 28, when he tells his readers that they are to bless those who persecute them, but bless and not to curse. The expression to rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep, also looks like a popular proverb. For the Apostle at once returns again to his description of the conduct of the Christian. Christians are people who are striving for one and the same goal ; because each has the interests of all the others at heart. This is, however, only possible if they do not strive after high things, but suffer themselves to submit to low conditions, in order to devote themselves to those who live in such. Again the Apostle interrupts himself by a direct word of command, suggested by Prov. iii. 7, because pride, which always makes a man consider himself higher than others, will always strive to secure a high position

not your mind on high things, but ¹condescend to ²things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. (17) Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. (19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto ³the wrath of God: for it is written, ⁴Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. (20) But ⁵if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

XIII Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers:

¹ Gr. *be carried away with.*

² Or, *them.*

³ Or, *wrath.*

⁴ Dt. xxxii. 35.

⁵ (Prov. xxv. 21 f.)

17 among men. Again he returns to the description of the Christians, who do not repay evil with evil, but rather, according to Prov. iii. 4, make provision for that which is beautiful in the eyes of all, even in those of an opponent. As much as they can they keep peace with all men, but naturally when these make this possible; for
 18 evil is to be opposed. They do not avenge themselves, as the Apostle especially urges upon his beloved because this is so hard; but to them the word of God
 19 applies, "Give not way to wrath;" because, according to Deut. xxxii. 35, God has reserved for Himself and His judgment of wrath the retributive vengeance. The direction given in Prov. xxv. 21-22 is to bring the enemy to a painful feeling of shame and sorrow by showing him love. In this way, concludes the Apostle, instead of permitting yourselves to be overcome by evil, suffering yourselves to be driven to vengeance, you are rather to overcome the evil that your enemy does to you by good, and the enemy, brought to shame by your magnanimity, will turn and become your friend.

1 Discussing duties to the community the Apostle proceeds to the duties of each individual as such. Among these the first place is assigned to obedience to the

for there is no power but of God ; and the *powers* that be are ordained of God. (2) Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God : and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. (3) For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power ? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same : (4) for ¹he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid ; for ¹he beareth not the sword in vain : for ¹he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. (5) Wherefore *ye* must needs be in sub-

¹ Or, *it*.

government. Every individual, as Paul emphasizes, is to subordinate himself to those in authority. For those in authority would not exist if they had not been appointed by God ; and those who actually hold these 2 positions are the ones appointed by God. For this reason all resistance to the government, through which perhaps we would attempt to repel a harm that it would inflict upon us, is resistance to a heavenly ordinance, by which we bring down upon ourselves suffering and condemnation. For the rulers who, in the 8 name of God, inflict this suffering as punishment, are an object of fear only to those who do evil. If we do not want to fear the government, then all that is necessary is to do good, and we will receive praise instead of punishment. It was still in the better days of the rule of Nero, when Paul could confidently count upon the government as the servant of God in the administra- 4 tion of the law, so that those who did good would experience only good, and that only those who did evil had cause to fear the government, as it does not wield the sword, the symbol of the power to punish, without reason, but rather to punish the evil-doers in the name of God. For to the government, as His servant, God has entrusted the legal execution of His wrath over the evil-doers. And for this reason we must submit to the 5

XIII, 6-9] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

jection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. (6) For for this cause ye pay tribute also ; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. (7) Render to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute *is due* ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honor to whom honor.

(8) Owe no man anything, save to love one another : for he that loveth ¹his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. (9) For

¹ Gr. *the other*. Comp. 1 Cor. 6. 1 ; 10. 24 ; Gal. 6. 4.

- government, not only on account of the punishment which it inflicts as the agent of divine wrath, but for conscience' sake, which would register against us as a sin against God every refusal to submit. For the same reason the payment of taxes is a matter of conscience.
- 6 For in demanding taxes the government only renders to God a public service, which accrues to the common good. But in order to care for the common good by these taxes, they are ever diligent in collecting them.
- 7 The Apostle does not intend to enter upon the discussion of all other duties. Every individual knows of himself what his duties are in his special relations of life. The matter of importance is this, that he fulfils this duty toward all. Just as we pay taxes to those who have a right to demand them, so should we fear in every relation of duty to excite the wrath of him who has a right to demand this fulfilment of duty from us, even if this were only by the refusal of the honor due him.
- 8 Although we are to owe no man anything, there is nevertheless one point in which we are never to believe that we have paid our full debt to our neighbor and thus completely done our duty, and that is mutual love. For every manifestation of love is in fact a fulfilling of the law ; but love, according to its essence, demands a constant renewal of its manifestation, and for this reason
- 9 the debt of love can never be paid. Every single command that prohibits any harm being done to the

this, ¹Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (10) Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

(11) And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is ²salvation nearer to us than when we *first* believed. (12) The night is far spent,

¹ Ex. xx. 13 ff. ; Dt. v. 17 ff.

² Or, *Our salvation nearer than when, etc.*

neighbor, is summarized in the words of Lev. xix. 18. But as love, according to its essence, can never do any harm to the neighbor, then it also cannot do anything that is forbidden by the law of love to one's neighbor, and is then, according to its essence, nothing else than the fulfilment of the law. But as the law at all times demands that it be fulfilled, love must always be doing something that duty to our neighbor demands, and dare never believe that it has satisfied this duty. But the readers are to take this to heart all the more because they are acquainted with the present situation of affairs, in which the approaching day of the Lord admonishes to a strict fulfilment of duty. The hour was at hand in which men should finally rouse themselves from the sleep of security, into which they in former times again and again so easily fell, because the supremacy of sin prevented the proper watchfulness. For the deliverance from destruction, which the gospel offers them, is already nearer to them than it was when they became believers, since the return of the Lord, which shall take place in the present generation of mankind, a large part of which has already passed, has now come considerably nearer, and with this also the final decision concerning salvation and destruction. The night, which, as it were, in the time that preceded this return, was yet hanging over the earth, and in which

XIII, 13-14] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

and the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. (13) Let us walk becomingly, as in the day ; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. (14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

men in many cases fell into the sleep of sin, is already far advanced, as the break of day, which comes with this return, has approached. Just as at the coming of day people lay aside their night garments, thus they, too, are entirely to lay aside their old life, as this is constantly showing itself in the sinful works which belong only to the night and its darkness. But their day garments are to be an armor, in which they at all times fight against that which does not harmonize with the light of the approaching day. Now
13 they are to walk as it is proper for the full light of day, in which all indecent things are avoided. But such things are the opulent banquets, with their temptations to drunkenness, to which they were often invited by the people of their nation who had remained unbelievers, as also the lasciviousness with its excesses, the contentions that take place on these occasions, and the
14 jealousies in which they easily result. The Apostle again returns to the image of garments. The constant renewal of the communion of life in Christ that had been established by baptism, he here represents as a putting on of Christ, whose holy essence, as it were, is the garment in which we should at all times appear. But this is only possible if we at all times fulfil our principal duty, the one which each owes to himself, namely, the duty of a strict self-discipline. To this belongs, not that we deny our natural and bodily being the proper care which it has a right to claim, but that this care shall not transgress the proper bounds, where-

XIV But him that is weak in faith receive ye, *yet* not, ¹for decision of scruples. (2) One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. (3) Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. (4) Who art thou that judgest the ²servant of

¹ Or, to doubtful disputations.

² Gr. household-servant.

by the satisfaction of its reasonable demands by excess degenerates into the arousing of sinful lusts.

The Apostle turns from the general exhortations to 1 express his views concerning certain differences of opinion in Rome as to what was permissible and what was not. There were those whose confidence in the redemption through Jesus was so weak, that they thought it necessary anxiously to avoid many things, in order not to lose their salvation. Paul directs that these are nevertheless to be received into the communion of the brethren, so that no judgments of condemnation be expressed on account of the doubts which this weakness raises on this or on that point. A truly fraternal spirit includes also an earnest consideration of the conscience of the others. The fact of the matter 2 was, that one person did not hesitate to eat everything without fearing any damage to his soul's salvation, but that the weak thought it necessary to avoid the use of meat, and for that reason ate only vegetables. The one who ate meat should in this case not despise the one who did not eat it, because he was under the spell 3 of his prejudices; but the latter was also not to condemn the former on the ground of a lack of conscientiousness. God had Himself called also the one who thought liberally in these matters in grace to be a member of the congregation of Christ. It is arrogance for one person 4 in this way to condemn the servant of another. The latter had his own Master, whose business alone it was to see whether he was faithful in the discharge of his

XIV, 5-6] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. (5) One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. (6) He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he

duties or if he was unfaithful. But he would remain standing in spite of his more liberal sentiments; for the Lord would protect him from falling who with a good conscience made use of his liberty. But this Lord is Christ, into whose service God placed
5 him when he was called. But there were other differences of opinion. One person thought it proper to consider one day in comparison with another as a day on which it was not permitted to eat certain things; the other regarded all days as the same and knew nothing of special fast days. The Apostle is of the conviction that this difference has nothing to do with the fact of Christian life, and that it has its roots in differences which originate only in natural reason. For this reason he is only concerned, that everybody comes to a full conviction concerning the correctness of his way of thinking, because a deed contrary to one's conviction is also contrary to conscience. From a Christian standpoint these differences are entirely indifferent matters. He who is concerned to distinguish one day above the other as a fast day, is doing this only for his Lord, whom he wishes to serve by his
6 obedience. But he, too, who eats on such a day, is doing this in the service of the Lord, as his prayer at table shows; for he certainly could not render thanks to God for food which he was conscious of enjoying contrary to the will of his Lord. This same table prayer he, too, pronounces who has abstained when he partakes of his

eateth not, and giveth God thanks. (7) For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. (8) For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. (9) For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. (10) But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God. (11) For it is written,

¹ As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow,
And every tongue shall ² confess to God.

(12) So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

¹ Is. xiv. 23.

² Or, give praise.

meager meals. The Apostle points to the fact, that 7
for us as Christians this is characteristic, that nobody 8
lives for himself and serves his own selfish purposes
and interests, but for the Lord, whom we are ourselves
to serve with our death, if He should demand that we
suffer as martyrs. Only in this way can we prove that
we belong to the Lord, who has won us for Himself 9
through His atoning death as His property, and through
His resurrection has again returned to life, in order to
exercise His government over us. But this extends
over the living and over the dead; for which reason we
are to serve Him even in our death. The Apostle 10
further asks, who has given any person the right to
judge his Christian brother or to despise him, which
includes judging another. For there is but one highest 11
Judge, before whose tribunal we all must sometime 12
stand, and whom, according to Is. xlv. 23, all will be
compelled to recognize as their Judge. As each one of
us must then give an account of himself, we are not to
deport ourselves as though we are responsible for the
conduct of the other, since we are to answer for our own
judging and despising of others.

XIV, 13-16] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(13) Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. (14) I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. (15) For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. (16) Let not then

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- 13 With a play on words the Apostle deduces from the preceding the duty of the more liberal-minded. One person is no longer to judge the other, but they are rather to regard this as a matter of duty, that they do not give their brother any occasion to sin. Here it is clear that the Apostle agrees with the liberal-minded; and he emphasizes this so decidedly, in order that from his instructions no false conclusions could be drawn contrary to his convictions. He is firmly convinced, on the basis of a word of the Lord like Matt. vii. 15, that nothing is profane in itself, i. e. nothing is contrary to the consecration of the Christian, but it only *becomes* such
14 for him who regards it as profane. But for this very reason the Apostle must admonish the liberal-minded, for whom all food is equal, to give no offense to his brother. For if he induces the brother to eat of that
15 which the latter regards as unclean, he causes him deep regret and lamentation on account of such an unimportant matter as food, which he could easily have denied himself. But in this case he no longer walks according to love, since through his eating he causes his brother to suffer that harm which all action contrary to conscience brings with it, although Christ has died for him also, in order to save him from destruction. Accordingly he does not only sin through his lack of love for his brother, but also against Christ, whom he deprives
16 of the fruit of His sacrifice and death. And even more

Your good be evil spoken of : (17) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (18) For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. (19) So then ¹let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. (20) Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean ;

¹ Many ancient authorities read *we follow*.

than this ; for it follows that the highest good of the Christian is derided by the Gentiles, when they see that the Christians quarrel with each other on account of such insignificant things as eating and drinking. For this is certainly no matter of importance for the highest goal of the Christians, the kingdom of God, but the one thing needful is the righteousness that is given through grace, the peace and the joy that are based on the Holy Ghost, who inspires the possessor of this good, which guarantees to him the participation in the consummation of the kingdom of God. Only he who serves Christ with a view to that which is the most important for the kingdom of God according to its essence, is really pleasing to God, who in His kingdom requires only that in His service His will should be accomplished, and this is to be demonstrated even to the unbelievers, because the calling of the Christian is proved by his conduct. For this reason they are only to strive for that which is conducive to harmony and to edification, i. e. to the advancement of one through the other.

The Apostle again returns to the thought, that it is not right, for the sake of such an insignificant thing as food, to tear down what God Himself has built up in the new life that He has awakened in the brethren. Everything is clean in itself, and is sinful only for him who eats something for the sole reason that the eating of the liberal-minded has led him to this eating contrary to his con-

howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. (21) It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *to do anything* whereby thy brother stumbleth.¹ (22) The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he ² approveth. (23) But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.³

XV Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of

¹ Many ancient authorities add *or is offended, or is weak*.

² Or, *putteth to the test*.

³ Many authorities, some ancient, insert here ch. 16. 25-27.

21 science. In such a case it certainly would be praiseworthy not to eat any meat at all, nor to drink any wine, which the weak, for the sake of their salvation, think they must deny themselves; nor to do anything that would cause a brother to sin or to fall, or would
 22 even endanger him on account of his weakness. If the more liberal-minded appeals to his unshaken confidence in redemption and is not therefore swayed by any scruples in reference to food, he may have this confidence before God, who knows the strength of his faith even if he does not exhibit this confidence before men. For his salvation is dependent on the fact, that he does not pass judgment upon himself in that which he approves, concerning the permissibility of which he
 23 is convinced from the outset. He, however, who, when he eats even doubts whether it is right or not, is condemned from the outset, since he did not eat because of the unshaken confidence of faith, as the liberal-minded does. For not only that which is directly contrary to conscience, but that too which does not come from such a confidence of faith, is sin, because it shows, that a man did not consider it necessary to preserve this faith. But how great is the danger to mislead to sin a brother who has not this confidence of faith!

1 At the conclusion of these special admonitions the Apostle again turns to those who are strong in the

the weak, and not to please ourselves. (2) Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, unto edifying. (3) For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, ¹The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. (4) For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through ²patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. (5)

¹ Ps. lxi. 9.

² Or, *steadfastness*.

faith, among whom he includes himself, as he shares their convictions. These very persons are in duty bound to bear with the weaknesses of those who cannot overcome their prejudices in reference to the danger of certain foods to their salvation. It may indeed at times be hard to deny oneself his well established liberty solely on account of the consideration of others; but it would be pure self-satisfaction if the insistence upon this liberty should cause hurt to a neighbor. We should seek to please him, not for the mere sake of 2 pleasing men, but in order that his pleasure in us may serve his good and advance his growth in Christian life. On this point the Apostle refers to Christ as the model. He, if He had taken care only to please Him- 3 self, would not have suffered the abuses of the enemies of God to fall upon Him, as the prophet, according to the interpretation of Paul, hears Him lament in Ps. lxi. 4 70. But this, like all that was written before in the prophetic times, is to serve for our instruction. The purpose of this indeed goes far beyond that for which Paul points to the example of Christ. For when the Scriptures speak of the sufferings of our Redeemer, who has been exalted to God, they thereby produce in us too, the patient endurance of our sufferings and the comforting certainty that these serve our good, and in this way make our hope for a similar final exaltation all the more sure. With this the Apostle connects the 5 wish, that God, from whom alone patience and com-

Now the God of ¹patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: (6) that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify ²the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (7) Wherefore re-

¹ *steadfastness.*

² Or, *God and the Father.* So 2 Cor. 1. 3; 11. 31; Eph. 1. 3; 1 Pet. 1. 3.

fort come through the influence of the Scriptures given us, may produce among themselves the harmonious striving for this goal of their hopes, which each one strives to advance in the other according to the purpose and the will of Christ. But this again is to
6 lead them to the harmonious and united glorification of God, who, because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has made us certain of this blessed goal through His exaltation to be our Lord and the Mediator of our salvation.

7 But this harmony and unanimity in the glorification of God can be attained only when all the parts of the congregation unite into one company of Christian brotherhood. The Apostle had demanded this in the preceding of the strong, who, in despising the weak, so often considered them unworthy of being members of this communion. He here expressly extends this demand also to the weak, who, by the fact that they judge the strong declare those to be unworthy of this membership. He directs both parties to the example of Christ, whose gracious acceptance of all the members of the congregation has, as a matter of fact, already resulted in the glorification of God. But here he sees another difference in the congregation, which is even more far-reaching than that between the strong and the weak, and which was perhaps at times found in connection with the latter and seemed able to destroy the unity of the congregation, if the grace of God had not in the same way caused both differences to redound to the

ceive ye one another, even as Christ also received ¹you. (8)
For I say that Christ has been made a minister of the circum-
cision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises
given unto the fathers, (9) and that the Gentiles might glorify
God for his mercy ; as it is written,

²Therefore will I ³give praise unto thee among the
⁴Gentiles,

And sing unto thy name,

(10) And again he saith,

⁵Rejoice, ye ⁴Gentiles, with his people.

(11) And again,

⁶Praise the Lord, all ye ⁴Gentiles ;

And let all the peoples praise him.

¹ Some ancient authorities read *us*.

² Ps. xviii. 49 (or 2 S. xxii. 50).

³ Or, *confess*.

⁴ Gr. *nations*. Comp. Mt. 4. 15.

⁵ Dt. xxxii. 43.

⁶ Ps. cxvii. 1

glory of God. There were, on the one hand, the be- 8
lievers from among the Jews, whom Christ had served
first, by bringing to them the message of redemption.
But this had to serve the glorification of the truth of
God, who proved that He would keep the promises that
He had given to the fathers by fulfilling these through 9
Christ. On the other hand, the heathen must glorify
God, who, although He had in no way bound Himself
by any promise as far as they were concerned, had out
of free grace brought redemption to them. With this
the Apostle again returns to the theme of that section,
in which he was so deeply interested, namely, to the
calling of the Gentiles and the final realization of the
promises given to his people. He again refers to the
fact, that this has already been foreseen in the Scrip-
tures. If, according to Ps. xviii. 49, the Messiah intends
to glorify God and sing His name among the Gentiles.
He could do this only by bringing the Gentiles also 10
into the congregation of God, and exhorting them, ac- 11
cording to Deut. xxxii. 43, to join with Israel in re-
joicing, and, according to Ps. cxvii. 1, in praising God

XV, 12-14] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(12) And again, Isaiah saith,

¹ There shall be the root of Jesse,

And he that ariseth to rule over the ² Gentiles ;

On him shall the ² Gentiles hope.

(13) Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(14) And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowl-

¹ Is. xi. 10.

² Gr. *nations*. Comp. Mt. 4. 15.

12 But Isaiah says expressly, xi. 10, that the Shoot that
13 comes out of the root of Jesse, which in the first instance
appeared to the people in the person of David, arises
in order to rule over the Gentiles, who now put their
hopes upon Him. The Apostle closes with a renewal
of his good wishes, and appeals to God, from whom
alone all hope comes. He is to bring everybody, in
regard to these points in which there was a difference of
opinion in Rome, to the full certainty of conviction.
But this is to be done in such a way, that all the joy
and the peace of soul, which are found in the fact that
they are believers, are not to be lessened by any of
these differences. Then they will always increase in
the richest of hope, which depends on the power of the
Holy Spirit who is working in them.

14 As Paul expressly emphasizes the fact that the
readers are instructed in his way of teaching (vi. 17),
and that he could strengthen his faith through theirs
(i. 12), he thinks it necessary to justify his course in
writing this letter. He is himself also convinced and
needs not to be assured of this by anybody else, that
they themselves, even without his admonitions, are
already filled with excellent understanding, since they
have an abundance of all kinds of knowledge, which
they need in order that they may be able to instruct
one another. To this then, naturally, belongs also the

edge, able also to admonish one another. (15) But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, (16) that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles,¹ ministering the ² gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. (17) I have therefore my glorying in Christ

¹ Gr. *ministering in sacrifice*.

² See marginal note on ch. 1. 1.

knowledge of the doctrine of redemption, upon which the Apostle purposes to found all his exhortations (xii. 1). For this very reason it seems that he had, in part, 15 assumed more than this conviction apparently justified, when he wrote as he did. The Apostle is probably thinking of his extensive elaboration of the doctrine of redemption, which *they* really did not need, and which he yet considered a deeply felt necessity on his part, and even a sacred duty (i. 15), to place into *their* hands. He accordingly intends in this way to recall to their mind that which may have escaped their memory, because the grace that had been given him in his Apostolic calling justified him in recalling these things. From the very fact of the calling that had been assigned to him in the service of Christ, he, as a high priest, pre- 16 sides over this joyful message of God, the contents of which he has developed in this letter. For it is his special mission to bring an offering to God, such as the believing Gentiles have become for Him, who, out of gratitude for the grace that has been given them in the gospel, have consecrated themselves entirely to Him as a well-pleasing possession—of course, not in their own strength, but in so far as the Spirit bestowed upon them, on the basis of such a strengthening of their faith and their knowledge, permits them to become so in the progress of their sanctification. If then, by recalling truths of redemption that are so well known to them, 17 together with the grounds and consequences of these

XV, 18-19] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

Jesus in things pertaining to God. (18) For I will not dare to speak of any ¹ things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, (19) in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of ²the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto

¹ Gr. *Of those things which Christ wrought not through me.*

² Many ancient authorities read *the Spirit of God.* One reads *the Spirit.*

things, he seems to be boasting for himself of a special prerogative and ability to do this, he possesses this prerogative in Christ, who has taken him into His service. He possesses this also in his relation to God, who has entrusted him in the gospel with this priestly function in its interpretation and inculcation.

- 18 For certainly he would not be bold enough to claim to speak of any of these things, which Christ has not really effected through him in word and deed, in order to bring Gentiles to the obedience of the faith, and in
19 this way boast without any cause. For Christ alone can have given him the power to accompany the preaching of the gospel with signs and wonders, as well as the power of the Spirit, by which he has aroused faith among the Gentiles. For in this way alone has it become possible for him fully to carry out the proclamation of Christ enjoined upon him. His preaching began in Jerusalem, where he, on the occasion of his first visit, proclaimed the name of the Lord (Acts ix. 28), as he had done over a wide circuit since he had already preached Christ in Damascus (ix. 19, 20). From this point his activity extended over Syria and Cilicia (Gal. i. 21), over the provinces of Asia Minor, where he had engaged in mission work with Barnabas (Acts. xiii. 14), in Galatia and Phrygia (Gal. iv. 13; Acts xviii. 23), over Macedonia and Greece (Acts xvi-xviii), until he made his headquarters in Ephesus, and from there extended his activity over all Asia Minor. As the extreme limit the Apostle designates Illyria, to which place he prob-

Myricum, I have ¹fully preached the ²gospel of Christ; (20) **yea**, ³making it my aim so to ²preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; (21) but, as it is written,

⁴ They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,
And they who have not heard shall understand.

(22) Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: (23) but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, (24) whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see

¹ Gr. *fulfilled*. Comp. Col. 126.

² See marginal note on ch. 1. 15.

³ Gr. *being ambitious*. 2 Cr. 5. 9; 1. Thess 4. 11. ⁴ Is. lli. 15.

ably penetrated from Macedonia (Acts xx. 2). He considered it a point of honor only thus to proclaim the gospel and not go to those regions where the only Lord 20 and Mediator was already known, and where the foundation of congregations had already been laid by others. He rather considered it his special mission as Apostle to lay the first foundation, and accordingly to build on new ground. This mission he already found pointed out in Is. lii. 15.

The Apostle begins the announcement of his coming 22 visit by a reference to i. 13. In that passage he had spoken of the fact that he had often been prevented in the past from coming to them, and he now explains that the vast work which he had undertaken had in most cases hindered him from doing so. But now this 23 hindrance is removed, as he has no further work to do in those regions in which he has been laboring. For at all leading points of intellectual life in the Orient congregations had been established, from which Christianity could spread. And as he has for so many long years been exceedingly anxious to come to them, he thinks that he will now no longer be prevented from doing this. He 24 has, indeed, selected for a distant goal of his missionary activity the extreme west, and intends to journey to Spain. On the way there he hopes finally to see them and

XV, 25-27] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company—(25) but now, *I say*, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. (26) For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. (27) Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are

to receive from them companionship on his journey. But only after he has satisfied himself in communion with them, which of course could take place only to a
25 limited degree in a passing visit. He is not able to set out on the journey to Spain at once. He is now at the point of returning to the starting-place of his work in Jerusalem (cf. v. 19), because he had to render the saints there a service. For this service, too, which has interfered for the present with his contemplated visit, is the
26 result of external causes. For Macedonia, with which Achaia joined, had decided to furnish an evidence of fraternal communion with the poor among the saints in Jerusalem, in a manner which he does not describe in detail. It is true that he himself, in accordance with a promise he had made before (cf. Gal. ii. 10), had started this project of a collection and had begun the work in Asia Minor (cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 1); but he had then only determined personally to take the collection to Jerusalem (1 Cor. xvi. 4), when the collection turned out much larger than had been expected (cf. 2 Cor. viii. 1-5). Here he cannot omit to say, that he does not regard this decision as accidental but as dictated by duty. Here he states, probably not without the purpose of giving the Chris-
27 tians in Rome a hint, a general principle and, tells why he considers the Christians of Macedonia and of Achaia as debtors of the Christians in Jerusalem. If the Gentiles have received a part of the spiritual advantages which the latter possessed, it is simply their duty and

For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it *to them* also to minister unto them in carnal things. (28) When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. (29) And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

(30) Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Obligation to show to them service also in the advantages which pertains to the bodily life, a service in the very expression he declares to be for the general good. For the congregations of the Christians are to feel that they are one, so that by the helping of the needs of one part the whole may be helped. For this reason he considers himself in duty bound, however much this may at present interfere with his plans, to render this service by carrying up the collection personally, and 28 impressing upon the Christians in Jerusalem, that this collection was nothing more than the fruit of the spiritual good which had been received from that place.

Not until he has accomplished this will he be able to begin his journey to Spain, in which he will pass through Rome and thereby make it possible for him to visit them. For he could not, consistently with the principles that guided him in his missionary activity, as has been shown above, select Rome as a place for independent work. But he knows that in connection with 29 such a casual visit also, he will come to them with a fulness of blessings, which Christ will give his readers through him. He demands of them further, appealing to their common Lord, whom he wishes to serve by this visit, and 30 to the love that has been worked by the Spirit, that they assent to his wishes. The point is, that they are to help him in struggling against all the enemies who would hinder him in the further development of this activity, especially in his contemplated Roman and Spanish jour-

and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; (31) that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judæa, and *that* my ministration which *I have* for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; (32) that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest. (33) Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

ney. This the Romans cannot do, unless they offer their prayers to God for him. It almost seems as though, at the time when he wrote this, he had already received information of the plots of the hostile Jews to destroy him on the journey which he had contemplated along the Syrian coast (cf. Acts xx. 3). It was still possible for him to avoid these dangers by going along
81 the land way to Macedonia; but it was evident enough that the unbelievers in Judea, whom, on account of their refusal to believe, he calls the disobedient, would find better opportunities for such machinations in Jerusalem. For this reason their prayers are to be directed to this end, that he may be delivered from his enemies. But there is another thing that causes him anxiety. He knows that among the believers in Judea there are many who, on account of his activity among the Gentiles, regard him as an enemy of the people and of their law (cf. Acts xxi. 20-21). For this reason he is by no means sure, that the collection which had been gathered among the believers in Gentile congregations, and which he had brought, would be favorably received by the saints in Jerusalem. They must pray that he may come to them in joy through the will of the Lord Jesus, in whose service he is undertaking the present
82 journey. Only in this case his wish will be fulfilled, to rejoice undisturbed in his communion with them, as he
88 had in substance expressed this already in i. 12. But he appeals to God, without whom no prosperity devoid

XVI I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a ¹servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ. (2) that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.

(3) Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, (4) who for my life laid down their own necks; unto

¹ Or, *deaconess*.

of danger and care is possible, with the prayer, that He would help him in all these things, just as they, too, pray for this help. He seals this petition with his Amen.

Now comes the letter of recommendation for her who **1** is bringing this Epistle. Paul recommends Phœbe not only as a Christian sister, but also as a deaconess of the congregation in Cenchreæ. It seems that he is already tarrying in this port, and had made use of the leisure which he gained while waiting for a vessel to write this **2** letter. Her reception is to be exercised in the communion of life in Christ, and is accordingly to be determined by Him, and is to be worthy of the followers of God, of whom she is one. They are to help her in every business in which she needs assistance, because she, too, has been a helper of many and of himself also. **3** Paul sends to the congregation greetings for Prisca and Aquila, who had been his co-laborers in the cause of Christ, and that, too, together with Urbanus, who is mentioned later by name (v. 9). We are acquainted with this couple from the Acts, where the woman has the slightly changed name of Priscilla. Since in the Acts her name is sometimes placed first she seems even more than her husband to have helped the Apostle in his **4** work. At what place these two had an opportunity, as it were, of putting their heads upon the block of the executioner, that is, had been subjected to the greatest danger in life in order to save his life, we do not know.

whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles : (5) and *salute* the church that is in their house. Salute Epænetus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ. (6) Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on

Paul declares that not only he but all Gentile congregations, for whom they saved the Apostle, are grateful to them for this. To the assembly that meets in their house Paul sends greeting. But this couple, as far as we know, at this time lived in Ephesus (cf. Acts, xviii. 19, 26 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 19 ; 2 Tim. iv. 19). It seems then that this letter of recommendation was addressed to the congregation in Ephesus to which place Phœbe went first, and, after having completed her business there (v. 2.) continued her journey to Rome. Paul himself could have added this letter to the Epistle to the Romans, because to this congregation she could not have been recommended in any better way than through this document. It could just as easily have been appended in Ephesus, where they naturally made a copy of this
6 grand Epistle to the Romans. He greets Epænetus, who was won as a first-fruit of western Asia Minor for Christ, is naturally to be sought for in Ephesus. Paul calls him his beloved, as he afterwards does Ampliatus, Stachys and Persis (vv. 8, 9, 12), only in the case of the first mentioned with the addition, that not personally but only through the communion with Christ he had come into closer relation to him.

Now follows a long series of greetings to persons
6 whom Paul probably learned to know during his activity in Ephesus. At the head is a woman named Mary, who had been zealous for the welfare of the congregation ; something that is also later favorably mentioned of Tryphæna and Tryphosa, but especially of his dear Persis, with the addition, that this had taken place in

you. (7) Salute Andronicus and ¹Junias, my kinsmen, and **my** fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who **also** have been in Christ before me. (8) Salute Ampliatus my **be**loved in the Lord. (9) Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker **in** Christ, and Stachys my beloved. (10) Salute Apelles the **a**pproved in Christ. Salute them that are of the *household* of **A**ristobulus. (11) Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of **the** *household* of Narcissus, that are in the Lord. (12) Salute **T**ryphæna and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute **P**ersis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. (13) Salute

¹ Or, *Junia*.

the Lord, hence in a special service of the congregation (v. 12). Persis, however, as was the case with Mary, **had** on account of advanced age, been compelled to end **her** services in the congregation, which the other two **still** continued to render. The fact that Paul is so accurately acquainted with these congregational matters, **is** again only possible in the case of a congregation where he had labored as long as he did in Ephesus. In particular as members of his own people, possibly more exactly as his relatives, the Apostle designates Andronicus and Junias, to whom, in v. 11, he still adds a third, Herodion. The former two had become Christians **7** before he had, and must originally have been members **9** of the first congregation in Jerusalem, as they had secured special recognition among the first Apostles. When they had enjoyed the opportunity of sharing the imprisonment of the Apostle we do not know. Paul calls Apelles an approved Christian, as he later (v. 13) called Rufus the chosen one, whose mother had shown him, too, motherly love. Not all the people of Aristobulus, probably his slaves, could have been known **10** to the Apostle, as he greets only a few. Whether their master was dead or had remained an unbeliever, we know as little as we do this of the people of Narcis- **11** sus, of whom only a few had been converted, since **13**

XVI, 14-17] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. (14) Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them. (15) Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them. (16) Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

(17) Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are

Paul sends greetings only to the Christians among
14 them. The five men mentioned by name, who together
with their unnamed companions, are here greeted, prob-
ably constituted a special gathering like that which
met in the house of Prisca (v. 5.). Still larger seems
15 to have been that at the head of which stood Philologus
together with his wife Julia, Nereus together with his
sister and a certain Olympas, as Paul expressly greets
all the saints, who were accustomed to worship to-
gether with these. As a matter of fact it is not very
probable, that all of these were people whom the Apostle
had learned to know in the territory of his activity in
the past, had in the meanwhile gone to Rome to live
and that he had acquired sufficient knowledge of them
and their life there to secure by his greetings connec-
tions in the congregation which was otherwise not
personally known to him.

The Apostle appeals to the congregation to seal their
16 communion of love by the sacred kiss and greets them
in the name of all the Christian congregations. From
many of these he had probably received these instruc-
tions before he left Ephesus. As the Apostle states
afterwards, in his farewell address to the elders at Eph-
esus, he here takes it for granted, that after his depart-
ure heresies of different kinds will arise there (cf. Acts
17 xx. 29, 30). He here, too, closes with the earnest warn-
ing against these, although in the lengthy Epistle to the
Romans we read nothing of this danger. He is think-

causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the ¹ doctrine which ye learned : and turn away from them. (18) For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly ; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent. (19) For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoyce therefore over you : but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple

¹ Or, *teaching*.

ing of those that elsewhere, as his readers are aware, have caused dissension and offense by seducing to false doctrines some contrary to those that they have been taught and inducing them to leave the congregation. They are to go out of the way of these people, who do not serve Christ, whom alone as our Lord we are obligated to serve, but are using their influence in the congregation solely to find gratification of their carnal desires, 18 through their fine sounding and easily deceptive or their carefully prepared and persuasive words, which deceive the hearts of those, who, because they themselves have no evil purposes, presuppose that others too are equally free of deception. The Apostle separates these deceivers entirely from the congregation, and only admonishes that the congregation be on its guard against 19 them because he is sure of the obedience of the readers. This too presupposed a congregation in which he has labored long as he had done at Ephesus, and which he had opportunity thoroughly to test. He can even say that the praise of their obedience has come to all to whom he has spoken of them ; and that to-day he re-joices at this. But still he could not ignore the danger that threatened their congregational life, because it was his wish that in case this became necessary, they should know what they are to avoid in order to abide by the good and to be pure, so that they have no dealings with that which is evil. He is firmly convinced of this, that God, who alone is able to preserve the peace of the

XVI, 20-23] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

unto that which is evil. (20) And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

(21) Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. (22) I Tertius, ¹ who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord. (23) Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city, saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.²

¹ Or. *who write the epistle in the Lord salute you.*

² Some ancient authorities insert here ver. 24. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen,* and omit the like words in ver. 20.

20 congregation, will strengthen them, so that when these servants of Satan rise up among them, they will tread them under foot and will thus crush them, i. e. will exclude them at once and entirely from the congregation. There then follows at last the salutation with which the Apostle was accustomed to end his letter, in the form of a prayer that the grace of our Lord Jesus would always accompany and help them. But as the Epistle to the Romans is not yet finished, it follows that this letter of recommendation was originally addressed to another congregation.

21 And now we come, at the close of the Epistle to the Romans, to the greetings which the Apostle sends to the Roman congregations, beginning with those of his co-laborer, Timothy, to whom he adds three members of his nation or relatives of Paul. The amanuensis to whom the letter is dictated here takes the liberty of inserting his
22 greeting. However little he may have been in personal contact with the Romans, he knows himself one with them in the communion of life with Christ. Then the
23 Apostle sends greetings from Gaius, with whom he had lived in Corinth, but who had kept open house for all the members of the congregation. He must have been one of the few wealthy men in the congregation, as the city treasurer Erastus belonged to the few from the higher class. Quartus is simply called the Christian brother.

(25) ¹ Now to him that is able to establish you according to **my** ² gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the **revelation** of the mystery which hath been kept in silence **through** times eternal, (26) but now is manifested, and ³ by the **scriptures** of the prophets, according to the commandment of **the** eternal God, is made known unto all the ⁴ nations unto

¹ Some ancient authorities omit ver. 25-27. Comp. the end of ch. 14.

² See marginal note on ch. 1. 1.

³ Gr. *through*.

⁴ Or, *Gentiles*.

Instead of the salutation, which only the copyists 25
thought necessary to add as v. 24, the Apostle closes
his rich and powerful letter with a glorification of God.
 This, however, is addressed to God as He who can do
 what he can wish them, and what he intends to accom-
 plish through his contemplated visit (cf. i. 15), the place
 of which for the present, and possibly for all time, this
 letter must take. For according to his gospel, which
 bases all redemption on the grace of God, it is God in
 the end who can alone accomplish this. In the same
 way, in spite of all that Paul has done for this purpose
 in his letter, it is only God who can confirm his message
 concerning Christ, i. e. render it safe against all the
 objections of the Jews and the Gentiles. In the same
 manner He has made known through the appearance of
 Christ the secret of His counsel of redemption, which
 had been hidden for a long time. True, it was only
 possible through divine revelation that it could be made
 intelligible to the chosen preachers of this message, how
 this secret had been made known in Christ. But now
 it can be made known to all the Gentiles through
 prophetic writings, from which it is clear, that the sal-
 vation that is now revealed is none other than that
 which had been determined from the beginning. This 26
 has taken place in accordance with the command of
 eternal God, who rules all the ages, in order that the
 Gentiles, too, shall be brought to the obedience of faith.
 In this way the Apostle closes with the same thought

obedience ¹ of faith : (27) to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, ² to whom be the glory ³ for ever. Amen.

¹ Some ancient authorities omit *to whom*.

² Or, *to the faith*.

³ Gr. *unto the ages*.

27 with which he began his letter i. 2-5. To Him, the only wise God, who at all times knows ways and means for the purpose of carrying out His counsel of redemption, the glorification is addressed, which the Apostle directs to Him through Jesus Christ, because it is He alone in whom this counsel of divine wisdom has been revealed by the fact that He carried it out.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

I Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes, ¹ our brother, (2) unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, *even* them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their *Lord* and ours: (3) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Gr. *the brother*.

Paul expressly states that he is writing as an Apostle 1 of Christ, who has been called by the divine will, and accordingly has the Apostolic authority. For this reason Sosthenes, who is simply called a Christian brother, can only join in with the greeting with which the Apostle begins his letter. Possibly he was a prominent member of the Corinthian congregation, temporarily staying with Paul at Ephesus. With a purpose the Apostle states, that if he writes to the Corinthian Christians as a con- 2 gregation of God, he does this only because they all are consecrated to the possession of God in the communion of life with Christ, into which they have been transferred through baptism. In this it is also suggested, that they are to show themselves worthy of this high calling. But he reminds them further, that they had been called to the dignity of such saints only together with all Christians who call upon the name of the Lord at every place where they are to be found, as in the city where Paul and Silas are tarrying. For this reason the Corinthians are not to separate themselves from the way of life led by others. The Apostle can report this, too, concerning the Christians among whom he is living. The letter intends to show how much it was necessary

(4) I thank ¹ my God alway concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus ; (5) that in everything ye were enriched in him, in all ² utterance and all knowledge ; (6) even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you : (7) so that ye come behind in no gift ; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ ; (8) who shall also confirm you unto

¹ Some ancient authorities omit *my*.

² Gr. *word*.

to remind them of both these things,. The salutation is exactly the same as that found in Rom. i. 7.

- 4 The thanksgiving with which the Apostle is accustomed to open his letters is occasioned in the case of the Corinthians by a special bestowal of grace which has been given them in Christ. This consists in a rich variety of spiritual gifts, which they have received in
5 the communion of life with Christ. The natural aptitude of the Hellenic population for oratory and speculation had been raised to a higher sphere and been sanctified by the Spirit, whom they had received in this communion with Christ, and had developed into all kinds of gifts for teaching and into knowledge of the
6 truth, as this was seen in their public services. This was in harmony with the fact that the testimony concerning Christ, in accordance with the quick aptness of the Hellenic mind, had taken firm root in their hearts, because firmness of faith is a prerequisite for all gifts. But as faith itself is a gift of grace, the Apostle declares
7 that God has not suffered them to be lacking in any kind of a gift of grace, neither in their life of faith nor in the evidence of this in the congregational life, in order to supply them with the one thing which Christian life here upon earth, by its very nature, stands in need of. For we indeed cannot see here upon earth the glory of our exalted Master, but we must wait until it is re-
8 vealed to us at His return. But the Apostle is convinced that He who has so strengthened this faith, will also strengthen them in their Christian and moral life,

I CORINTHIANS

[I, 9-11]

The end, *that ye be* unreprouable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

(10) Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no ¹ divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (11) For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them *that are of the household* of Chloe, that there are

¹Gr. *schisms*.

which, indeed, as we shall see, was in a precarious condition, so that they in the end would be able to stand unblamable on the day of our Lord Jesus, when God will conduct the judgment through Him. This cer- 9
tainly is based on the faithfulness of God, who, when He called them into the Christian congregation had promised that He would bring them to participate in the glory which His Son already had attained in His exaltation. For this faithfulness makes it certain, that God will also keep the promise which He gave them when He worked faith in them through His message of redemption, and will provide that on the day of judgment they shall attain this glorious goal.

The first admonition of the Apostle is directed 10
against the party spirit in Corinth. With an appeal to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, which alone the Christians should confess, he exhorts them all to say the same thing and not to be divided by the shibboleths of different parties. Rather, wherever this division had taken place, they are to return to unity even in those things which do not properly belong to the Christian sphere but are only rooted in the natural sense for the understanding of human affairs, and in the judgment concerning these. For Paul had heard through 11
the people of Chloe concerning the party contentions among them. He means by this that each one of them

contentions among you. (12) Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. (13) ¹ Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul? (14) ² I

¹ Or, *Christ is divided! Was Paul crucified for you?*

² Some ancient authorities read *I give thanks that.*

12 has a party rallying cry. If the one says that he is a pupil of Paul, as was the case with the greater part of the congregation, the other replies that he is a disciple of Apollos, and a third of Cephas. Concerning Apollos we know that he labored with great success for a long time in Corinth (Acts xviii. 27, 28); but Peter, too, on his mission journeys must have come here (cf. 1. Cor. ix. 5), and have converted many. But there were in Corinth also those who had been in Jerusalem and had seen and heard Christ in person, for which reason they with special pride called themselves the disciples of Christ. The natural inclination of the Corinthian Greeks toward the formation of parties had resulted, through the contention concerning the advantages of the different teachers, in the formation of parties, and these were called by the names of different men. In view of these Paul asks, with a reference to the name last mentioned, a question which brings its own negative
13 answer, namely, whether Christ, whose special disciples they boasted to be, had been given as a special possession to any of them. But among those who called themselves by the names of human leaders, he turns especially to those who with special pride call themselves his own pupils, with the question, whether Paul has been crucified for them, or whether they had been baptized in his name. Only the former supposition could obligate them to belong to him specially, and only the latter
14 could especially emphasize such an obligation. Paul considers it as a divine providence, for which he is in duty bound to render thanks, that he has in only a

I, CORINTHIANS

[I, 15-17]

~~th~~ank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius ;
(15) lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my
~~my~~ name. (16) And I baptized also the household of Stephanas :
~~besides~~, I know not whether I baptized any other. (17) For
~~Christ~~ sent me not to baptize, but to ¹ preach the gospel :
~~not~~ in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be
~~made~~ void.

¹ Gr. *bring good tidings*. Comp. Mt. 11. 5.

~~F~~ew individual cases baptized persons in Corinth. He
~~mentions~~ the leader of the synagogue, Crispus, who
~~had~~ come over to the Christian congregation when it
~~separated~~ from the Jewish synagogue (Acts xviii. 8),
~~and~~ Gaius, who in Corinth had been his guest-friend
(Rom. xvi. 23). But all the others, as we also happen to
hear, too, in reference to Peter (Acts x. 48), had been
baptized by his associates. Now he rejoices on this 15
account, since now none can say that he had been bap-
tized in the name of the Apostle, and that the latter
had put him under special obligations to follow him.
At this point the Apostle remembers that he had also
baptized the family of Stephanas, concerning whom we
know no particulars. But as in this way the Apostle 16
has been impressed by the deceptive character of his
memory, he further adds, that at any rate he does not
know whether he had baptized any others.

Especially was it the pupils of Apollos who overesti-
mated the higher philosophical training and the oratory
of their teacher (cf. Acts xviii. 24), and accordingly
exalted him above Paul. For this reason the Apostle
enters upon a discussion of the relation of the preaching
of the gospel to human wisdom. Connecting it with
that which he has said in reference to his baptizing, he
begins by stating that Christ had not sent him for this 17
purpose, since for the performance of the external rite
of baptism there was no need of a special call or gifts.

(18) For the word of the cross is to them that ¹perish foolishness; but unto us who ²are saved it is the power of God.

(19) For it is written,

³I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

And the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought.

¹ Or, *are perishing*.

² Or, *are being saved*.

³ Is. xxix. 14.

He had sent him for the purpose of preaching the gospel, and expressly not in the methods of philosophical lectures, such as the Corinthians were accustomed to in the schools of the rhetoricians, and in the discourses of their sophists. Mixing in wise argumentation or oratorical embellishments could result in nothing else than in detracting the attention from the center of the proclamation of redemption, namely, the death of Christ on the cross. This truth would then be emptied of its unique power. For it is characteristic of the word, which has at its kernel the cross of Christ and nothing
 18 else, that it is effective through itself. True, not in the case of all; for, as matters stand, there are some who will be destroyed, and who measure all things that they hear solely according to human wisdom. To these accordingly this word is absolute folly. Upon such the gospel can have no influence whatever. But Paul can appeal to the experience of all believers, according to which this word, through the power of God, produces faith in them; and it makes them certain of this, that they, being delivered from eternal destruction, that had been their destiny, have been saved and thereby received eternal life. The fact that the proclamation of
 19 the cross, which makes no use of human wisdom, has such power, the Apostle finds already based on the declaration of God in Is. xxix. 14, namely, that He would put to nought all human knowledge and that this He has proved in the present. He asks, as if triumphantly,

I CORINTHIANS

[I, 20-21]

(20) Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this ¹world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? (21) For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the ⁷preaching to

⁶ Or, *age*.

⁷ Gr. *things preached*.

how any representative of the wisdom of this world age, 20
be he an exponent of Jewish theological law or of sophistic disputation, would yet dare to come forward after God has made this world's wisdom foolishness. But this He did, by showing that their claim to have discovered the truth is empty and worthless, as this truth certainly can be found only on the true way that leads to the redemption of man. He actually and as a matter of fact manifests this truth through a proclamation, which knew nothing and wanted to know nothing of this wisdom. But this was the case because this wisdom had shown itself perfectly incapable of solving its problem. For God had revealed His wisdom to the Gentiles in the creation and in the government of the world and to the Jews in the law and in His guidance of Israel. But mankind in its hostility to God had not 21
in its wisdom recognized God in His wisdom, because His redemptive purposes had remained entirely hidden from them. For this reason He determined through this message of the cross, which from the standpoint of the world was foolishness, as it had nothing of its own wisdom, to save mankind by working in them through it and through it alone the saving confidence in the redemption based on the cross of Christ alone. True, this message did not have this saving effect in those who were seeking salvation in their own way; but it did in those who in faith accepted its teachings as to where and how this salvation was to be found. Accordingly it does not have this effect in those who, like

save them that believe. (22) Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom : (23) but we preach ¹ Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness ; (24) but unto ² them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (25) Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men ; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

¹ Or, a Messiah.

² Gr. the called themselves.

22 the Jews (on the whole), demanded that the Mediator of redemption was to accredit Himself to their satisfaction by outward miracles (cf. already Matt. xii. 38; Mark viii. 11; John vi. 30), or who, as was the case with the Greeks, sought only for what they called wisdom, and in which alone they found satisfaction. For this message, which He had entrusted to the Apostle and to
 23 other preachers, treated of nothing else but of Christ, as the One who, through His death upon the cross, had achieved redemption. This would be for the Jews, as had been already described, only an offense, because in their eyes a person who had died upon the cross could only be rejected by God and accursed of God, and hence could not possibly be the Mediator of redemption. In the same way such a message, which contained nothing of what in their opinion was wisdom, was of a neces-
 24 sity absolute foolishness for the Greeks. Only in the case of those, in whom God through His call awakened the acceptance of faith in this message of redemption, and of whom there were some among the Jews as also among the Greeks, Christ, who had been preached to them, proved to be One who was not powerless, but produced in them by the power of God the saving confidence in redemption. Nor is it foolishness, because in the divine counsel, which through this faith is to lead men to salvation, He reveals to them all the depths of the mysteries of God. In this way it turned out, that
 25 this folly of the message which came from God is still

I CORINTHIANS

[I, 26-28]

(26) For ¹ behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: (27) but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; (28) and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, *yea* ² and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the

¹ Or, *ye behold*.

² Many ancient authorities omit *and*.

Wiser than men are, who, with all their wisdom, are not able to comprehend this counsel of God in reference to their salvation. In the same way it appears that this message coming from God, but lacking in all the means by which in other cases the word of man usually makes its impression, was still stronger than men, who are never able to achieve the one important thing, namely, the saving confidence in redemption.

For this Paul could appeal to their own experience. All they need to do is to consider the evident fact, what kind of people those were, in whom God had effected through His gospel its acceptance in faith and whom He thereby called into His congregation. Among these 26 there were not many who according to human standards were wise, not many to whom high birth or station gave power and influence. But by this fact God proved that He does not require human wisdom and human power, in order to bring about the workings of His grace in the call. But those who were without any of the wis- 27 dom of the world and without any worldly power and 28 without any nobility of birth, and hence were despised by the world, and were in fact considered as nothing, were chosen by Him as those in whom He intended to work such effects of His grace. And in this way He put to shame the wise and the powerful of the world, and deprived him who was considered as something by the world of all real influence. He shows that for the pur-

things that are : (29) that no flesh should glory before God. (30) But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, ¹and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption : (31) that, according as it is written, ²He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

¹ Or, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.
² Jer. ix, 23 f.

- 29 poses of His redemption, not only all these worldly advantages are not needed, but that they are even a hindrance, so that nobody could boast before God, of having acquired through his natural and human endowments these gifts of grace in the election and the call.
- 80 Rather, on the contrary, it was to be the work of God and His grace, if they now, as the chosen, are called into the congregation and through baptism have been brought into the communion with Christ. But that everything depends on this and on this alone, is clear from the fact that Christ has through God, who sent Him, become for us the Author of a wisdom, in which there has been revealed to us the whole counsel of God for our salvation. But in this is not meant only a revelation for our knowledge. He also manifests Himself to us as the One who realizes this counsel of redemption in us. He has through His atoning death become for us the Author of the righteousness that is given by God through the living communion with the Author of our sanctification, and has thereby become the Author of our salvation, which will from all time deliver us from
- 81 destruction. All this He is to become for us, says the Apostle, appropriating the words of Jer. ix. 32, and referring to Christ, in order that if anybody would glory, he should not glory in any human advantages, but exclusively in Christ as His only Lord and Mediator.

The Apostle applies these general statements to himself and to his conduct in Corinth. When he came to them, as is the duty of every preacher of the gospel, he

I CORINTHIANS

[II, 1-6]

II And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of ¹ speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. (2) For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (3) And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. (4) And my ¹ speech and my ² preaching were not in the persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: (5) that your faith should not ⁴ stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (6) We speak wisdom, however, among them that are full-

¹ Or, word.

² Gr. *things preached*.

³ Many ancient authorities read *mystery*.

⁴ Gr, *be*.

came not because of any special advantage in regard to 1 oratorical gifts or philosophical training, in proclaiming to them the testimony of the redemptive acts of God in Christ. For he determined not to exhibit among them 2 the highly-educated Corinthians, any other knowledge, be it that he already possessed it or that he would acquire it, except his knowledge concerning Christ as the Crucified One. And he at any rate, whatever may 3 have been the manner of others, appeared before them in weakness; hence without any showy and attractive characteristics, through which he could perchance hope to make an impression on them; and for this reason he came with much fearfulness. For neither his 4 way of speaking nor the contents of what he proclaimed turned out to be based on the arts of persuasion, such as the wisdom of the world employs. In his case both were based solely on the proof which the divine Spirit and the manifestations of power that proceeded from Him, brought to bear upon them. For the 5 conviction of the truth of what he proclaimed was not to be dependent on human wisdom, which could be refuted in turn by a wisdom of a higher kind, but solely on a divine manifestation of power, the experience of which is and will to all times remain irrefutable.

It is, however, true that there is a wisdom possessed 6

grown : yet a wisdom not of this ¹ world, nor of the rulers of this ¹ world, who are coming to nought : (7) but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, *even the wisdom* that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the ¹ worlds unto our glory : (8) which none of the rulers of this ¹ world hath known : for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory : (9) but as it is written,

² Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not,
And *which* entered not into the heart of man,
Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him.

¹ Or. *age* : and so in ver. 7, 8 ; but not in ver. 12.

² Is. lxi. 4 ; lxi. 17.

by those who proclaim the gospel. But they do not speak this wisdom when they address unbelievers or young Christians, but only when speaking with those who are fully developed in their faith. But this is not a worldly wisdom or a wisdom of rulership, such as belongs to the present world ; because it has been shown that everything that in the world is prominent on account of wisdom or of power has lost its significance
7 for Christianity. Nor is it that wisdom of God, which is found in the simplest proclamation of the gospel (cf. i. 24, 25), but it is a wisdom that, as such, is hidden. This can only be produced in the form of a secret that is known, and can be known to no man, because it does not pertain to that redemption which has been revealed to us in Christ, but which has been determined from
8 all ages, and pertains to our heavenly glory. How absolutely ignorant the pre-Christian world had been in reference to the counsels of this divine wisdom, can be best seen in the case of those in authority at the time of Christ, both Jewish and Gentile, who were in the condition to decide either for or against Christ. For if they had known this wisdom they would not have crucified Him who was destined to be the Lord, who possesses this glory and is to give it to those who are
9 His. But to these applies that word of God, otherwise not known to us, which expressly describes that which

◀ 10) ¹ But unto us God revealed ² *them* through the Spirit :
 For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
 ◀ 11) For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save
 the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of
 God, none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. (12) But we re-
 ceived, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is
 from God; that we might know the things that were freely
 given to us of God. (13) Which things also we speak, not in

¹ Some ancient authorities read *For*.

² Or, *it*.

God has prepared for those who love Him (cf. Rom. viii. 20), as something that has never been known, or even suspected. For since the Apostle, together with 10 the other preachers of the word, can speak of this secret, it has been revealed to them through the Spirit of God, who imparts knowledge to them, and by the very nature of the case searches out every thing, even the depths of God, in which these counsels are hidden. For just 11 as the human mind alone knows the innermost nature of man, as our self-consciousness proves, thus too only the divine Spirit knows all the depths of the divine 12 Being. But now the Spirit, whom the preachers of the gospel have received, is not a spirit that belongs to the sphere of humanity and produces human wisdom, but is that very Spirit from God in whom God knows Himself as man knows himself in his self-consciousness. He accordingly can teach, and it is his mission to teach us that which is given us in the counsels of God's grace, and accordingly, too, the perfect salvation that has been prepared for our future. But what the 13 preachers of the gospel thereby say, this they also say, as far as the form is concerned, not as though they were taught by human wisdom, i.e. by the art of oratory, but in the words which the Holy Spirit teaches them to express the contents that are revealed by Him, hence uniting spiritually effected contents with spiritually effected form.

words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; ¹ combining spiritual things with spiritual words. (14) Now the ² natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually ³ judged. (15) But he that is spiritual ⁴ judgeth all things, and he himself is ³ judged of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

¹ Or, *interpreting spiritual things to spiritual men.*

² Or, *unspiritual* Gr. *psychical.*

³ Or, *examined.*

⁴ Or, *examineth.*

A man who is still entirely limited by his natural
14 and human state of mind, in the nature of the case, is absolutely incapable of receiving that which in this way in both form and contents comes from the divine Spirit. Because it has nothing to do with natural and human wisdom, it is folly to him. He is not able to understand its true character as a divine wisdom, because it can only be judged in a manner that is marked by the Holy Spirit as that which it is; and this Spirit such a man does not possess. For this reason the preachers of the gospel cannot in their mission preaching discuss this divine wisdom, as it would not be understood. Only
15 he who has received the divine Spirit and has in his entire character come under His influence, which is the case with the advanced Christian, judges all things as they are to be judged, and accordingly that too which in form and contents is given by the Spirit, and which Paul and his companions preach among them. They themselves, however, who are under the guidance of the Spirit, are judged as they should be judged by none except those who are also guided by the Spirit, and are thus understood as they want to be understood. To this Paul refers the passage Is. xl. 13, interpreting it
16 of Christ. The mind of Christ he alone can understand, who has His mind. But together with the Spirit of Christ, who has been given to him and to all man-

III And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. (2) I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet ~~able to bear it~~: nay, not even now are ye able; (3) for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and

Christians, the mind of Christ has also been given, which understands the mind of Christ, and accordingly also those entirely hidden divine counsels, which He intends in the future to realize, have been bestowed.

Here the Apostle, making an application of his general discussion, returns to a mention of his first stay in Corinth. It was a self-evident matter, that he could 1 not at that time proclaim to them this wisdom of God. For he certainly could not speak to them as to spiritually-minded people, who alone are able to understand this wisdom that the Spirit has manifested, but only as to men, who, because they have not yet received the Spirit, consisted entirely of flesh, as he was addressing those who were not converted. But if he farther spoke to those who had just been converted, he could only speak as to those who were not fully matured Christians. For even if they had received the Spirit, because in their baptism they had been received into the communion of life with Christ, yet they were by no means already entirely under the guidance of the Spirit, but had made only a small beginning of the Christian life that the Spirit works. At that time he could, as it were, 2 give them only children's food, because they were not yet able to take heavy spiritual food; and to their deep humiliation he was compelled to add, that they even now are not yet prepared for this, although a long time had elapsed since their conversion, because they are entirely yet under the dominion of the flesh. This he 3 proves by a reference to the party troubles in Corinth,

strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? (4) For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another I am of Apollos: are ye not men? (5) What then is Apollos and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed

in which the one party was jealous of the other and quarreled with each other in reference to their advantage. For such is the way of men who are still under the rule of their flesh and controlled by sin, and who walk after the manner of purely natural men, and 4 who in fact, as he afterwards says, are not yet to be distinguished from the ordinary run of men, such as we know in their natural condition. If here he has in mind the contention of the Apollos disciples against the Paul disciples, it is clear, that the quarrel had been begun by the former, and that the Apostle's discussion so far referred to the objections which the Apollos disciples had raised against his simple way of teaching, which in form and contents lacked the excellency of their own teacher.

The Apostle shows wherein the real difference between 5 the various teachers consists, whose superiority was a matter of dispute. As he condemns this quarreling altogether, the question arises wherein the different importance of an Apollos and a Paul consisted. The fact that the question is here put first in reference to Apollos, shows that the quarrel was begun by his pupils claiming superiority for him. In this regard both are on an equality, that they are servants and accordingly have only to render services to a superior Master. But also in this they are alike that they are to render the same service, namely, through their efforts to bring others to faith. Many of the congregation then owe their conversion to Apollos. Whatever differences may exist in the rendering of this service, this difference

I CORINTHIANS

[III, 6-10]

and each as the Lord gave to him. (6) I planted, Apollos watered ; but God gave the increase. (7) So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth ; but God that giveth the increase. (8) Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one : but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. (9) For we are God's fellow-workers : ye are God's ¹ husbandry, God's building.

(10) According to the grace of God which was given unto

¹ Gr. *tilled land*.

has again been given to each by Christ, and hence cannot be claimed as a virtue of one and not of the other. It is true that Paul has begun the work in the congregation and that Apollos had continued this work. But 6 any superiority that this difference involved is removed by the fact, that it is God alone who had to 7 give the prosperity to both. It is certainly clear that neither he that plants nor he that waters is anything in himself, but that it is God alone who blesses the labors of both by causing the growth, without which the planting and the watering would be without results. Their importance is thus in itself absolutely the same. A difference is merely produced by the fact that the ef- 8 forts that each puts upon the labor is different, as is seen from the fact that each receives the corresponding different reward. For it is God who has accepted them 9 as fellow laborers in His work and assigns to each his task. This task is the work among them in the Corinthian congregation. According to the image used above these would be regarded as a field, in which the one plants and the other waters ; or as a building which God decided to erect. In each case it is God in whose work they are engaged as helpers.

Also in his second similitude the Apostle further 10 develops his discussion further. He has at all times declared that the special grace which has been given him, namely, his Apostolic gift, is the gift of laying

me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation ; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. (11) For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (12) But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble ; (13) each man's work shall be made manifest

the foundation, that is, of the first founding of congregations (cf. Rom. xv. 20). In this way he has in Corinth like a skilful builder, laid the foundation, and anybody else can now continue the structure. But now the question arises as to how, i. e. with what materials, 11 is to do this. In laying a foundation such a question cannot arise, for a different foundation stone than that which had once for all been laid by God, cannot be found. This foundation stone is Christ. The work of founding a congregation can only consist in the faith-producing proclamation concerning Christ. He becomes the foundation stone of a congregation at a certain place. 12 It is different with the further work on the building in case a person trains the members of a congregation further and gains other new members. In this further work of building up a congregation it is possible for different building materials, i. e. different teaching materials, to be used. The Apostle distinguishes these as valuable and permanent, such as gold, silver and precious stones, such as marble and the like ; as useless and unsubstantial, such as woods of various kinds, straw and reeds. Of what kind the work will be 13 which each one performs in a congregation, will become manifest in the future. Only the great day of final judgment can make this clear, because in the fire of God's wrath this day will manifest itself as the deciding day, for then this wrath will be enkindled in order to destroy all that does not please Him. This fire itself will test each piece of work according to its character.

For the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. (14) If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward, (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.

(16) Know ye not that ye are a ²temple of God, and *that*

¹ Or. *and each man's work, of what sort it is, the fire shall prove it.*

² Or, *sanctuary.*

The judgment upon the members of the congregation involves the judgment upon the work of the teacher. As that which is consumed in case of a fire is the unsubstantial material, thus, too, that which is destroyed in the fire of divine wrath can only have been the teaching materials of an inferior character. But if that 14 piece of work which one has performed in the upbuilding of a congregation has stood the test of the judgment, then the workman will receive his reward. If, on the other hand, it has been consumed by the fire of the judgment, he will lose his reward. He himself, 15 however, because he has been laboring for the upbuilding of the congregation and has not perchance destroyed it by erroneous doctrines and has built upon the one foundation, namely, faith in Christ, shall in the judgment be delivered from destruction. Just as when a man is carried from a burning house through the fire, which cannot be done without suffering burns, thus he, when the judgment has arrived, which still finds him engaged in his work, will be saved as far as his person is concerned. But that his work is shown not to have stood the test will cause him much grief, because the only reward which a laborer can find in this, namely, that the work which he has done in a congregation has stood the test, will be lost to him.

From this the Apostle infers the evil results of party 16 agitation. His question shows that those whom he addressed seem to have forgotten what kind of a building

the spirit of God dwelleth in you? (17) If any man destroyeth the ¹temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the ¹temple of God is holy, ²and such are ye.

(18) Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this ³world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. (19) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ⁴He that taketh

¹ Or, *sanctuary*.
² Or, *age*

³ Or, *which temple ye are*.
⁴ Job v. 13.

their congregation was. It is essentially a temple of God; for such a structure is the dwelling-place of God, and God has made His abode among them through His
17 Spirit. This temple of God they are ruining through their party contentions, because, as a matter of course, only a harmonious congregation can be such a temple of God, and for this reason God will deliver those who have committed this crime over to destruction. The Apostle in his expression emphasizes the fact that this is the perfectly just punishment for such a sin. For the holiness of a temple makes it inviolable; and this is the case also with the congregation as the
18 temple of God, and hence also with them. No one is to deceive himself with the thought, that a matter of high importance had occasioned these party contentions. Here again it is made clear that it was the disciples of Apollos who had started this quarrel with their overestimation of the wisdom that they had received
19 from their teacher. For the Apostle draws attention to the fact, that if anyone thinks himself wise in the midst of the congregation, he must first of all become foolish in this world, i. e. must rid himself of all that which in the world is regarded as wisdom, in order to become really wise. For the wisdom of the human race in the present world is only foolishness according to the judgment of God, and therefore when measured by the only correct standard, really is such. For it is said, in Job v. 13, that God does sieze the wise with His fist

the wise in their craftiness : (20) and again, ¹ The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. (21) Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours ; (22) whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or

¹ Ps. xciv. 11.

to strike them down, and in this way to frustrate their cunning machinations. Yet must he judge their wisdom to be the direct opposite of what they imagine it to be. But Ps. xciv. 11 expressly states, that God knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vanity. Thus by 20 the example of the Apollos disciples the Apostle shows how vain is the pretension on account of which this party quarrel had arisen. But he concludes from this 21 in general, that nobody should boast on account of a human being and because he is the pupil of this or that man.

He proves this from another point of view by the fact that since each teacher has his special gifts and excellences, these endowments are to benefit all. If, then, they boast of any particular man, they thereby resign their claims to be partakers of the gifts of the others, although these, too, are intended for their good. Here he mentions, besides himself and Apollos, Cephas 22 also, whose disciples constituted a separate party, because he, too, had his special gifts and excellences, which should redound to the benefit of all. But he applies this thought to everything that is worldly, or is called so, and which accordingly includes good things of any kind, and even to all possible circumstances and possibilities of the present and the future, all of which certainly belong to them, because they are intended only for their benefit. Since they, by the fact that they claim to be the disciples of one man, forfeit their rights to the gifts and the excellences of all the others, they thereby harm their membership in Christ, and as He is

death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours (28) and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

IV Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that man be found faithful (3) But with me it is a very small thing that I should be¹ judged of you, or of man's² judgment: yea, I³ judge not mine own self. (4) For I know nothing against myself; ye

¹ Or, *examined*.

² Gr. *day*. See ch. 3. 13.

³ Or, *examine*.

the active Representative of God, their relation to God Himself. To Him alone they should belong, and are not to call themselves after the name of any man, as though they belonged to him.

- 1 But all party rivalry is at the same time an injustice to the teachers who are by everybody to be regarded as servants of Christ in a special sense, and as stewards of the mysteries of the divine plan of redemption contained in the gospel. But in this case all criticising of one teacher, which is only the other side of their over-estimation of another teacher, is antagonistic to their
- 2 responsibility to Christ and God alone. As for the rest, only *one* thing is to be sought in this service relation, which has nothing at all to do with the criticism in this or in that feature, of the work, namely, fidelity on
- 3 their part. As far as his person is concerned, this is indeed of the very least importance, i. e. is entirely indifferent if he is formally subjected to the judgment of them, or of any court established by men. But this is not based on any exaggerated estimation of himself, as it is natural for human pride to exalt itself over others; for he does not make his own judgment either the measure
- 4 of his work. The fact that he is not conscious of any mistakes in his official career, does not in itself prove that this career was in harmony with the standard of the divine will. But there is one who has the absolute right to judge of this, and that is the Lord, to whom

am I not hereby justified : but he that ¹ judgeth me is the Lord. (5) Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until **the** Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things **of** darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts ; and **then** shall each man have his praise from God.

(6) Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes ; that in us ye

¹ Or, *examineth*.

he is responsible for the doing of all that has been commanded him. If they then are absolutely determined to judge, they should at any rate not judge prematurely. They should wait until the Lord has **5** come, because He in His judging will dispense the only correct measure of justice. There is a fine irony in **this**, because, as is self-evident, all judging would then be superfluous. And yet only then will all the facts become evident on which the basis of a judgment can be placed. For only the Lord can bring to light what is hidden before the eyes of men, and was to them concealed by a veil of impenetrable darkness. To these things belong especially the motives and the purposes of the heart, which only the Searcher of hearts knows. Only then, on the basis of the actual facts laid bare by Christ in order to make possible a perfectly just judgment, will each one receive the praise that belongs to Him ; and in this the teacher, too, finds his greatest reward, but this only from God, so that the laudations that their party spirit produce are perfectly useless.

As the party spirit that prevailed in Greece was only the expression of the tendency natural to the Greek character of pride and self-glorification, the Apostle in the conclusion of his discussion describes what are the real foundations of the party contentions in Corinth. He has put what he has to say on this subject in a form **6** as though it were only a matter between himself and Apollos. This he has done for their sake, because

might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other. (7) For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? (8) Already are

on account of the intimate and friendly relations that existed between the two there could be no possible room for the misinterpretation, as though he sought to exalt himself or to abase his friend. In their relations they can learn what he, as it were, would like to give them as their motto, namely, not to go beyond that which is written. He is thinking in this connection of the warnings of the Scriptures against self-glory and the overestimation of one's own wisdom (i. 31; iii. 19, 20; cf. i. 19). But this he expressly explains in its application to the present case, in which one person constantly was swollen up with pride on account of that teacher whom he boastfully claimed as his own, and against the other teacher, whom he deprecated, in order
7 to elevate his party above the other. The rebuke of such pride he bases in the first instance on a question, in which the idea is found, that nobody but the person himself considers as of special importance him who thus is swollen up with pride. But even on the presupposition that he does possess the prerogative which he imagines he has, there is no reason for boasting, because he has not earned this advantage, but has only received it. Indeed, even if he really possesses it, he has no right to boast of it as though he had not received it but had earned it himself. And at this point all at once the indignation of the Apostle breaks forth on account of this carping and criticising of the teacher with cutting words of keenest and bitter irony. They are now already
8 fully satisfied. They already deem themselves rich in all

I CORINTHIANS

[IV, 9]

ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye have come to reign without us: yea and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. (9) For I think, God hath set forth us the apostles last of all, as men doomed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, ¹ both to angels and men.

¹ Or, and to angels, and to men.

prerogatives of the Christian state, although the Christian must still be longing for a further satisfaction of his desire for redemption and for a greater abundance of the gifts of salvation. They already act as though they had attained to the royal dominion, which indeed is in store for us as the goal of our Christian life (cf. Rom. v. 17), since they, by claiming such a supremacy over others, already take this before it is due them. Special sarcasm is found in the statement of Paul that they had without him and those like him attained to this, and in the expression of his lively wish that it might be so, so that they themselves, too, in their company attain to this final goal of the consummation of salvation; although naturally the pupil follows the teacher toward the consummation, and not the teacher the pupil.

How much they must be wishing this the Apostle 9 deduces from his well-founded conviction that they, the Apostles, who, because they have established the congregation have also the first right to attain this goal, have by God been marked out by the abuse and disgrace that have been heaped upon them, as people of the lowest character, and as those over against whom men can do anything. They stand there as those who are condemned to death, for whom all suffering and torment is permissible, because they, by that which is being inflicted upon them, have become an exhibition to all the world, both in heaven and here upon earth. With bitter words he places himself and those like

(10) We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye have glory, but we have dishonor. (11) Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; (12) and we toil, working with our own hands:

him in contrast to that which the Corinthians think
10 they themselves are. They have become fools for Christ's sake, since they have discarded all worldly wisdom, so that the cross of Christ which they preach may by its own power effect what it is intended to work. The Corinthians imagine that in their Christian state they have become so wise that they can venture to pass judgment upon their teachers, although in this very living communion with Christ human wisdom is of no importance. The Apostle and those like him are weak, because they have renounced all the brilliant advantages and human means of power; but the Corinthians deem themselves powerful enough to overcome the opposing party with whom they are contending. These are in their own eyes famous people, since everybody considers the party to which he belongs as the first, while the Apostle lays claim to no honor before the world. And now the Apostle gives a description of his life full of self-denial and troubles which he has
11 been leading to the present day. To that which has been mentioned is yet this to be added, that he and his helpers hunger and thirst; that they have not wherewith to cover their nakedness; that they suffer dire
12 abuses; that they wander about without home or habitation; that they work in their handicraft, as only the slaves in Greece did. Nor do they do anything to ward off the insults that are hurled at them, which fact make them appear doubly despicable in the eyes of the world. Instead of avenging themselves for their

being reviled, we bless ; being persecuted, we endure ; (18) being defamed, we entreat : we are made as the ¹filth of the world, the offscouring of all things even until now.

(14) I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. (15) For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers : for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the ²gospel. (16) I be-

¹ Or, *refuse*.

² Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

insults, they answer with blessings ; instead of defending themselves vigorously against the persecutions, they endure these patiently ; instead of punishing the slanderers, they speak of them with petitioning words. 13 In this way it has been brought about that they are regarded as the offscouring and as the filth of the whole world, and as the scum of all mankind. Thus they stand until this moment, in which the Corinthians are vieing with each other in self-exaltation and every one aims at being more than the other.

Here, the excitement of the Apostle abates again, as he begins to speak of the measures that he has decided to take in order to put an end to the party dissensions, namely, the sending of Timothy. However deeply humil- 14 iating his last words must have been to the Corinthians, it is not the object of his letter to humiliate them ; its purpose is to set them aright, as a father does his dear children. For he, and he alone, feels himself as their spiritual father. Other teachers had come after 15 him and had advanced them in their Christianity. And even if they had had innumerable such teachers in their Christian state, they can still only have one father, and this is he. For what they are in their living communion with Christ, they have become through him. It was he who begot the new life in them, through the preaching of the gospel. For this reason 16 he has a right to admonish them, as he had just done, to imitate his humility and his self-denial, as children

seech you therefore, be ye imitators of me. (17) for this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church. (18) Now some are puffed up, as though I

17 should certainly strive to imitate their fathers. For this very reason, too, he has already decided upon a measure in order to give the strongest emphasis to this admonition. How deeply the reports that he had heard from the household of Chloe concerning the party contentions that had broken out in Corinth (cf. i. 11) had affected him, we can see from the fact that he at once sent Timothy to Corinth in order to put an end to the trouble. For he was his beloved child, and had already been approved as such in the living communion with the Lord. He is to do nothing else than to remind them of the way upon which his father is walking in the living communion with Christ, because they seem to have forgotten the manner of life led by their father. If Timothy is to admonish them thereby to imitate this life, he does not then demand more of them than he is demanding of the congregations founded by him. Not as though he set up himself as a perfect model, but they can learn by the example of his matured Christian life how they are to walk in the living communion with Christ.

18 This sending of Timothy, however, is not to be understood as meaning that he did not personally intend to make them a visit. For, we shall see, he had promised them this long ago. It may seem surprising, that he here suddenly begins to speak of certain men who are boasting that they know that he will not again visit them. But we must remember that he, in i. 12, in addition to those who boasted of their teachers, had mentioned also those who claimed that they

were not coming to you. (19) But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and I will know, not the word of them that are puffed up, but the power. (20) For the kingdom of God

were the immediate pupils of Christ. The Apostle does not regard them as belonging to the congregation, for their being puffed up resulted from the fact that they pretended to be a superior people in the congregation, so that he now could no longer dare to show himself in Corinth. We shall learn to know these people thoroughly in the Second Epistle. He here has no occasion yet to discuss their case nor their purposes in detail. But as the party contentions just suited them in that the founder of the congregation had been degraded to the leader of a party, and his authority in this way in the congregation had been undermined, they certainly had done their utmost to stir up this strife. For this reason the Apostle has already mentioned them in i. 12, and at this place he speaks of their boasting. He 19 merely opposes to their claims the assurance that he would soon come to Corinth, although he naturally makes this intention subordinate to the will of the Lord, who directs his paths, and he must wait until He permits him to come. But that these men were among those who claimed to be teachers in the congregation, is clear from the fact that when he comes he will take no cognizance of their method of teaching, neither in form nor in contents; but only of their effects, i. e. to see what fruits they produce for the kingdom of God. For 20 these fruits, by their very nature, do not depend on this or that special method of teaching, as though they proceeded from mere words, but upon a power that proceeds from these words. Above he has shown that this very thing is a peculiar characteristic of his preaching of the gospel, that with the power of God it

is not in word, but in power. (21) What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

V It is actually reported that there is fornication among you and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of *you* hath his father's wife. (2) And ¹ ye are puffed up, and ² did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed

¹ Or, *are ye puffed up?*

² Or, *did ye not rather mourn, . . . you?*

brings about the confidence in redemption that is based on Christ alone. With this he leaves these intruders in the congregation and turns to speak to the congregation, to whom he will soon come back. They are themselves to decide, how they want him to come; if for the purpose of chastising them severely, as when a father prepares to do this with a rod or a stick, or in the love of a father and in the Holy Ghost, the characteristic of whose nature is mildness. As they undoubtedly want the latter, he has sent Timothy to them to put an end to the party contentions and to make the congregation imitate him as their father. But as the laying aside of many other abuses is necessary for such a coming, this question at the same time constitutes the transition to the Second Part, in which he turns to still more grievous sins of the congregation.

1 In general it is reported that the sin of fornication is common among them. Paul has received no special information on this subject, as he had in reference to the party dissensions. But people are generally speaking about it, and even of such cases as are unheard of too among the Gentiles. A case of incest had occurred in the congregation, one man having enticed away and married the wife of his father, namely, his stepmother.

2 And under these circumstances they were yet puffed up, which he had just rebuked in their party contentions. Rather should this have led them to sincere repentance, which would necessarily have resulted in the expulsion from the congregation of the man who had

might be taken away from among you, (3) For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, (4) in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, (5) to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord

done such a thing as to consummate a marriage of this kind. For he must declare to them, that he had at once known what was to be done in such a case as that of this person. Although he was absent 3 in the body and accordingly had no personal connection with the matter, he had nevertheless, because he is at all times present with them in the spirit, and before they had aroused themselves from their spiritual lethargy, formed his resolution as to what this guilty man deserved. He knows full well what he, if he had been present, would have done. But as he was not present, of course there cannot be any idea of carrying this out. But in order to show the full strictness of his judgment of this case, he yet will tell them, what he would have done with the man who had in this terrible manner committed this sin of incest. He would have called the 4 congregation together to a solemn meeting, in which he would have presided. But naturally, not according to his natural and human personality, but according to his new spiritual life, in which at all times the power of our Lord Jesus dwells, in order, in conjunction with them, to pass the judgment which he, at the command and hence by the authority of Jesus, would then have carried out. In this case he would have 5 handed over a criminal of this character to Satan, so that the latter would afflict him with bodily sickness which leads to death. But this again was only to have the purpose of bringing him who

¹Jesus. (6) Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? (7) Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even

¹ Some ancient authorities omit *Jesus*.

had fallen so low to repentance, so that the new spiritual life that was still in him, and which is not affected by bodily death, would be saved for the day of judgment. Of all of this nothing can be thought, as the congregation had not of itself come to the
6 conclusion to expel such a sinner. But this he yet can say, that under these circumstances everything that they had boasted of in their party contentions was deserving of no praise. They seem to have forgotten, as it is stated in the well-known saying of the leaven that leavens the whole lump, that a single sin, such as the inclination to fornication, which had caused this indifference toward the man guilty of incest, corrupts the whole life of the congregation, no matter how many praiseworthy things may yet be in it. It was evidently the Easter season, in which those thoughts fill the heart of the Apostle, when he, as a former Israelite, was accustomed to celebrate the Passover festival.
7 On this occasion all leaven was removed from the houses. In this way they are completely to clean out the old leaven of their sinful character in order to become a new leaven, which is a mass untouched by the corruption of their former mind. For they have as a matter of fact become new creatures through baptism, and have nothing in them any longer of the old leaven. For they, too, surely have a Paschal lamb, which has been sacrificed as were the Paschal lambs in the Easter season. This is Christ, who was crucified on the Easter festival. And after the slaying of the Passover lamb in the temple no leaven was to be in the

I CORINTHIANS

[V, 8-11]

Christ : (8) wherefore let us ¹keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

(9) I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators ; (10) ²not at all *meaning* with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters ; for them must ye needs go out of the world : (11)

¹ Gr. *keep festival*.

² Or, *not altogether with the fornicators, &c.*

houses. In this way they, too, are no longer permitted 8 to celebrate their Easter festival in the old leaven, not only no longer in the old, licentious life, but no longer in the leaven of any wickedness and wrong ; but rather, as Israel celebrated its festival with what was unleavened, thus they are henceforth all their lives to celebrate a festival in a purity which stands the test of the fullest light of the sun. This is a truly good conduct, which is in harmony with the revealed nature of God.

In order to secure at least the expulsion of the man guilty of incest from the congregation, the Apostle reminds them of an admonition which he had given them 9 already in a previous letter, but which has been lost. In that letter he had written to them that they should have no longer any communion with those guilty of fornication. Probably they had refused to accept this teaching, on the ground that it was too strict, and had misinterpreted him to say that he had spoken of all licentious persons in general. He here draws their attention to the fact, that he had not spoken of the licentious in general, but of those who had been guilty of the sins of the Gentiles in general, such as greed, robbery, 10 or idolatry. And with this he could not have meant those who belong to the world that is still hostile to God and with whom such sins, as a matter of course, are dominant. Because if he had meant this they would have been compelled to cease all dealings with mankind and the world altogether. As a matter of fact then, he 11

but ¹as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any
man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or
an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner ;
with such a one no, not to eat. (12) For what have I to do
with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them
that are within? (13) But them that are without God
judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.

¹ Or, *now I write.*

could accordingly, in that letter, have thought only of
the case, in which a person who calls himself a Christian
brother, has become guilty of such gross heathen sins,
to which he also adds slander and drunkenness. With
such they are to break off all dealings, and not permit
12 them to join them at table. If it had been his intention
to declare that those who are without the congregation
are unworthy of their associations, then this would be
a kind of disciplinary measure such as they exercise
against sinning members of the congregation in their
13 midst. But all judging he leaves to God, only for the
purpose of saving the congregation from contamination ;
and in order that they, too, outwardly may show, that
they will have nothing to do with such sinners, he yet
categorically commands them, with a manifest reference
to Deut. xvii. 7, to expel the man guilty of incest.

In connection with that which Paul had said about
judging, which certainly could not apply to the Gentiles,
who as such were outside of the congregation, he thinks
of the fact, that disputes which occur within the con-
gregation in Corinth were yet brought before the
heathen court for settlement. In doing this he only
seemingly departs from his discussion of fornication
and similar heathen sins, because the deepest reason
why these continued to occur was to be found in the
close association in which the Gentile believers still
stood with those who were yet unconverted. The former
were in this way constantly being influenced by the

I CORINTHIANS

[VI, 1-8]

VI Dare any of you, having a matter against ¹his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? (2) Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy ²to judge the smallest matters? (3) Know ye not that we

¹ Gr. *the other*. See Rom. 13. 8.

² Gr. *of the smallest tribunals*.

corrupt morals that ruled supreme among the latter. It was only a sign of this, too, that they still found no **1** objection to bringing their legal disputes before these Gentile tribunals, and there to conduct trials with Christian brethren, instead of having their differences settled by a Christian tribunal. Paul is indignant at this, and cannot understand how a Christian could consent to this. For the heathen, as the unjust in the most comprehensive sense, who know and try to know nothing of the norm of righteousness, are the least capable of judging. If they do not want to believe, that the Christians, who by their baptism have become **2** the property of God, are alone capable of judging, then they certainly must not know that the saints will some day judge the world. If they are to reign with Christ, who is not only the Lord but also the Judge of the world, then they must also have part in the latter work, and they surely will, because they are the living witnesses of this, that in faith a way has been prepared for the world to escape from the destruction to which it is doomed. If then the world is to be judged in the midst of the saints, who are gathered around the judgment seat of Christ, then certainly they will not be unworthy of constituting judicial courts which are to decide the insignificant matter of the property difficulties. Indeed, we will judge even the creatures of the **3** higher order, such as the wicked angels are, in so far as we testify, that these had at all times been active in trying to prevent the realization of the divine will upon earth, and thereby have become the objects of the judg-

shall judge angels? how much more, things that pertain to this life? (4) If thou ye have ¹to judge things pertaining to this life, ²do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? (5) I say *this* to move you to shame. ³What, cannot there be *found* among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren, (6) but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? (7) Nay, already it is altogether ⁴a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded? (8) Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren. (9) Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men,

¹ Gr. *tribunals pertaining to*.

² Or, *set them . . . church*.

³ Or, *Is it so, that there cannot, &c.*

⁴ Or, *a loss to you*.

ment of God. Why should they then not settle private disputes concerning things that have connection only with the needs of our daily life? When the Corinthians
 4 need tribunals to decide concerning such things, they place upon the judgment seats those very persons who otherwise are so deeply despised in the congregation, and these rather than all others. This he must say to their great shame. It seems as though there is among them not even a single one who understands these things
 5 and who would be able to act as a judge between him who is seeking justice and his brother. But rather one brother brings suit against his brother and that too before the judgment seat of unbelievers.
 7 It was already a loss in the healthy development of congregational life for them to have any legal contention at all. It would be Christian rather to suffer wrong and be damaged in property and goods than to go to
 8 law (cf. Matt. v. 41). But they themselves rather do wrong and do damage to property and goods, even to that of their brothers. For as a rule there is apt to be wrong on both sides, so that the plaintiff on one
 9 day becomes the defendant on the other. This takes

I CORINTHIANS

[VI, 10-11

(10) nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye¹ were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

¹ Gr. *washed yourselves.*

the Apostle back to his main subject, namely, that the 10
doing of wrong. in the widest sense of the term, is the
mark of the Gentiles, which as a matter of course ex-
cludes them from the kingdom of heaven. The Co-
rinthians were not to deceive themselves in this matter,
as if this was only an insignificant harm to their neigh-
bor. It is true of all wrong-doing, what is true of the
grossest of heathen sins, from which they once for all
are separated. Even if they in their pre-Christian lives 11
had not been guilty of all these sins, each one had cer-
tainly been guilty of some of them. But they know
what they had received in their baptism, when they
were washed clean from all contamination of guilt,
and thereby transferred into a new and consecrated
state of life and conduct towards God. Therein right-
eousness was declared to them as of grace, and with all
these things heathen unrighteousness is irreconcilable.
And all of this results, not from their good resolutions,
but because of the name of Jesus Christ, which marks
Him through His saving death as the One who has be-
come the Mediator of our redemption, and through His
resurrection as the One who has become our Lord; and
because of the Spirit, who has been given to us by God,
who has in Him again become gracious to us, and
through whom we are transferred into the living com-
munion with Christ. But in this the entire old being
has been slain in us and everything has become new.

Among all the heathen sins that prevailed in the
luxurious mercantile city of Corinth, none was more
terrible than that of fornication, which had made

(12) All things are lawful for me ; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me ; but I will not be

Corinth infamous. It could not accordingly be otherwise, than that this very sin again and again, through the close dealings of the Christians with their unbelieving neighbors, found an entrance into the congregation. The temptations to this sin in heathen company were all too great. To this must be added, that extra marital sexual intercourse, if the rights of the husband were not affected, was by the Greeks and Romans in general not regarded as something immoral, but only as a perfectly natural gratification of the sexual desires. Since Paul on principle did not make the Gentile Christians subject to the Old Testament law, it was a difficult matter for them to give up their former views on this subject. Indeed, it occurred that they would appeal to the principle of the Apostle: "All is yours" (iii. 21). From this they thought themselves justified in concluding that to the Christian, in purely natural
12 matters, everything was permitted. They quieted their conscience with the additional thought, that of course everything was not expedient, and that these things must be enjoyed with moderation. This was also regarded as true in respect to moral matters. Everything was in their power, but it was not right to permit oneself to be mastered by these things. Naturally sexual indulgence was not to be permitted to become a passion that would rule one absolutely. As for the rest, this was nothing else than the gratification of the sexual passion, as eating and drinking are the gratification of our desire for nourishment, in which, too, all excess and over-indulgence must be avoided. For this reason the Apostle enters upon the discussion of the relation of these two. It is not true that these two

brought under the power of any. (13) Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall bring to nought both it and them. But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body: (14) and God both raised the Lord, and will raise up us through his power. (15) Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make

stand on the same level. Food is intended for the 13 stomach, as the stomach is for the food, which it takes and digests. In this case the means of enjoyment and the organs of enjoyment are intended for each other; neither can attain a higher object, and for that reason have nothing to do with the sphere of morality. This appears from the fact that in the future God would abolish both. The body in the resurrection will be in no more need of nourishment, and accordingly will be without either. But the body, which is the organ of our moral activity, is not destined for the gratification of our sexual desires in fornication, but is intended for the exalted Lord, who purposes to make use of the body for the attainment of His purpose. And in the same way the Lord is intended for the body, to which He must give directions for the proper use of all of its impulses and powers. This again appears from the fact 14 that God has awakened the Lord into an imperishable bodily life, as He will also awaken us for this purpose. In this way an imperishable importance has been guaranteed for our body. If, as it were, the very omnipotence of God is called into use for its resurrection, then it must have an everlasting value.

To show this purpose of the body the Apostle appeals 15 to the Christian consciousness, that our bodies are the members of Christ, i. e. His organs, through which alone He can carry out what He purposes carrying out here upon earth. If now Christians put their bodies

them members of a harlot? God forbid. (16) Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? for, ¹The twain, saith he, shall become one flesh. (17) But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. (18) Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (19) Or know ye not that your body is a ²temple of the Holy Spirit

¹ Gen. ii. 24.

² Or, *sanctuary*.

into the service of lewd women, then they take away from Christ the organs that belong to Him and make them the servants of such women. This cannot possibly be right. In this connection it must not be forgotten, that the carnal connection with a lewd woman makes the two one body, so that each one with his body becomes a member serving the other, as God has expressly said of the character of carnal connection (Gen. ii. 24). The fact that at this passage the carnal connection in marriage is spoken of has no importance in this context, as marriage is a divine ordinance, in which, as in everything that belongs to it, we serve God and Christ. But carnal connection in fornication is not a divine ordinance, but a contradiction to the union with Christ in baptism, in which we have one spirit with Him; and this spirit alone is henceforth to rule over us, and does not permit fornication. For this reason, too, we are to flee fornication, because, differing from all other sins, which perchance injure us only from without, it is a sin against our own body and disgraces it. For the body of the Christian is surely a temple of the Holy Ghost, who has made His dwelling-place in it, which by such actions is desecrated. But as we have received this spirit from God, we are not allowed to say, that we by fornication are not guilty of desecration. As God has thus consecrated us to be His temple, we do not at all any longer belong to ourselves, and accordingly no longer have the right to do with our

I CORINTHIANS

[VII, 1-2]

which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; (20) for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.

VII Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (2) But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each

bodies what we please. For we have been bought at a real price. Christ has shed His blood for us, in order 20 to deliver us from the slavery of sin and to make us the property of God. Hence we should glorify God also with our bodies, by preserving them in perfect chastity in accordance with His will, which the Spirit has declared to us. With this Paul has once for all established, that it is only the deepest religious motives which are able and are intended to overcome the tendency to fornication.

In direct connection with what Paul had said of fornication, he adds his discussion of different problems pertaining to marriage, which the Corinthians had submitted to him in a letter. The first must in a very 1 general way have asked if it was not better to remain unmarried than to marry. The Apostle acknowledged that it would be something laudable for everybody if he could abstain entirely from sexual intercourse. He recognized in the repression of every natural desire a strengthening of moral power. But if men seek in this 2 total abstinence a protection against temptation to fornication, he sets up against this the principle that the proper protection against this evil is the legitimate gratification of the sexual desire in marriage. Paul by no means declares that this is the only purpose of marriage, or that he permits it as the lesser evil as compared with fornication. He declares marriage to be a moral duty in case, as it was in Corinth, the prevailing fornication was a great temptation to the entire com-

woman have her own husband. (3) Let the husband render unto the wife her due : and likewise also the wife unto her husband. (4) The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband : and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. (5) Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency. (6) But this I say by way of concession, not of commandment. (7)

munity. It was evident that in Corinth some had begun, for ascetic reasons, to deny each other sexual connection even in marriage. Over against this Paul transfers the gratification of the natural desire in marriage into the moral sphere by teaching this as a duty which each of the contracting parties owes to the other. He considers it as a mutual right of those married, that each one has the power of determination concerning the body of the other, and that accordingly the arbitrary refusal of marital cohabitation is a robbery of the other party. The only exceptional case in which this could in any circumstances be permitted, he bases on the mutual agreement of the two to abstain for a limited period of time, and for a reasonable purpose, such as he finds in special seasons of prayer, for which the enjoyment of our sensual desires also robs us of the proper state of mind. But, in all this, the marital sexual connection, as essential to marriage, is always to be regarded as the normal condition of affairs, so that Satan may not tempt them through the fornication evil that prevailed to such a phenomenal extent in Corinth. He foresees that those married people who are striving for the glory of being entirely abstinent can easily thereby be tempted to immoral acts. All this Paul naturally states as a matter of concession, i. e. with reference to their moral weakness, and not by way of

¹ Yet I would that all men were even as I myself. Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that.

(8) But I say to the unmarried and to widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. (9) But if they have not continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. (10) But unto the married I give charge, *yea* not I, but the

¹ Many ancient authorities read *For*.

command. For he wished that all would be as he, i. e. able to overcome all natural desires. But this wish has its natural limitations in the fact that everybody has his own specific gifts, and thus everybody has not received the gift of perfect abstinence as he has. From this he 8 makes the application to unmarried men, whether they be young men or widowers, and to widows. The young women do not come into consideration, as they have not the right to decide with reference to their own marriage. The Apostle repeats that it is laudable for these, too, to remain unmarried as he is. But again 9 this is opposed by the categorical command, that they *should* marry if they do not possess the gift of abstaining. Even if the temptation to fornicate does not itself endanger them, it is nevertheless better that they marry than that by thus abstaining from the gratification of their desires, their sexual desire is inflamed to a violent passion, which in itself is already something unclean.

The Apostle proceeds to discuss the divorce question. 10 For Christians this is decided by the express command of the Lord Himself (Matt. x. 9), which still is intended for the congregation of the believing, and which absolutely forbids divorce. Cases had undoubtedly occurred, or such occurrences were to be feared, in which it was the women who believed that they must dissolve their marriage, in order to live a life of total abstinence, since the Apostle enters upon this case first.

VII, 11-14] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (11) (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife. (12) But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. (13) And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. (14) For the

Jesus had not yet taken this phase into consideration, as in Israel the woman as such had no right to withdraw from her marriage. Parenthetically the Apostle remarks that, in case this had already happened, the woman should not marry again, because Jesus, in Luke xvi. 18, had declared that the marriage of a divorced woman was adultery, or she should become reconciled with her husband, so that she could return to him and ask his forgiveness. Concerning mixed marriages, as these originated from the fact that one of the two became a believer and the other continued in unbelief, Jesus could not, as a matter of course, have said anything. For this reason the Apostle applies the word of the Lord to this case only in so far, that at least the Christian party in such a marriage can never dissolve it, if the non-Christian party is at all willing to continue the relation. Only *one* doubt could arise against this, which had probably already been advanced in Corinth. It would seem as though the Christian party who was consecrated to God would be injured, and even desecrated by the close life communion with a person not a Christian. Over against this the Apostle sets up the statement that, on the contrary, the unbelieving party, on the basis of the communion of life with a believer, is already dedicated to God, and thereby removed from the profane world, to which he had hitherto belonged. He appeals for this

unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. (15) Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister

case to the consciousness of Christian parents, that their children are no longer unclean, but are dedicated to God. Baptism of infants did not exist at that time, and hence it could only be the holiness of the parents in the divinely ordained parental relation that was transferred to the children. But then, in the divinely ordained marriage relation also, the holiness of the Christian party must pass over to the non-Christian party. By the fact that God had called the one party in this marriage covenant, He declared His willingness to accept the other party also as His property, even if this naturally could be realized only through conversion. But if, on the other hand, the non-Christian party wished 15 to dissolve the marriage, he could do so, and the Apostle had nothing to command him. He does not say that in this case the Christian party should not continue the marriage relation, for he could not do this, or even that he could marry again, which, according to the word of the Lord, which forbids the remarriage of those who are divorced, was not allowed. He says only, that under these circumstances the married party is not slavishly bound by the words of Christ which forbid the divorce, so that his conscience would be loaded down by the consciousness of guilt, if his marriage had now, contrary to the law of Christ, been dissolved. It is impossible that God, who by awakening faith in the atoning blood of Christ, has called the one party into the congregation and has thereby given him peace of conscience, as he has to us all, has the purpose by this word of the Lord again to load him down

VII, 16-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called ¹us in peace. (16) For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife? (17) Only, as the Lord hath distributed to each man, as God hath called each, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all the churches. (18) Was any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircum-

¹ Many ancient authorities read *you*.

with the consciousness of guilt that deprives him of his peace of mind, in case the non-Christian party dis-
16 solves the marriage. For the thought, too, that he might have converted the un-Christian party, and in that way have delivered him from destruction, in case he had continued in his marriage, is not to disturb him. This is at best only a possible case, concerning
17 which he knows nothing. He knows only one thing, namely, that he, on his part, dare not do anything that would bring on this dissolution.

This leads the Apostle back to the general Christian principle, that every one is to deport himself in such a way as Christ has appointed for him in the station in which he finds himself, and in which He has assigned to him his special duties. For from this it follows, that he who has been called to the married estate is to fulfil all the duties connected therewith. But this general principle is so important in the eyes of the Apostle, that he expressly emphasizes the fact that he has established it in all his congregations, and explains this by two examples. It happened that the Jews, because they were ashamed of their circumcision in the presence
18 of Gentiles, tried to have it undone by means of a surgical operation (cf. 1 Macc. i. 16). In forbidding this to Jews who had become Christians, the Apostle is naturally not concerned about this single custom, the despicable motives of which he does not even touch, but about this, that the Jew discarded together with the circum-

cised. Hath any been called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. (19) Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God. (20) Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. (21) Wast thou called being a bondservant? care not for it: ¹ nay, even if thou canst become free, use it rather (22)

¹ Or, *but if*.

cision his obligation to enter the Jewish life and customs. This is clear from the contrast; since we know that the Apostle could for this reason never permit the demand to be made of the Gentiles who had been converted, that they should be circumcised because thereby they would have been obligated to the fulfilment of the entire Jewish law. It is a fact that in Christ both Jews and Gentiles had been made free from the law. They could neither by its fulfilment attain to righteousness, nor did they need this, as the Spirit taught them and enabled them to fulfil the will of God. But in this present 19 case it was a fact that the circumcised man should be bound to the legal life, but that the uncircumcised be free of this. Before God the one thing is of as little importance as the other. What he is to do is to fulfil the commands of God which God gives him by the fact that He has called him in this or that station of life; or, as Paul again expresses it, that he remain in the station in which he was when the call found him, and 20 that he do his duties. The second example passes from the contrast between the method of life in pre-Christian times to the still deeper contrast in the social sphere. If a person has been called to be a slave, he is 21 not to object to this, even if he can become free, and shall rather make use of his condition as a slave, to which he has been called, serving God by the faithful performance of his duties. If the slave has by the call of God been transferred into the living communion with God, then he has through Him been brought to the true 22

VII, 23-26] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

For he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman: likewise he that was called being free, is Christ's bondservant. (23) Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men. (24) Brethren, let each man wherein he was called, therein abide with God.

(25) Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy. (26) I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us,

freedom, the freedom from the slavery of sin, and he who has been called into the congregation of the Christians has become a servant of Christ. The external state of servitude is something relatively indifferent. If he has through the purchase money of the blood of
23 Christ been bought to be the property of God (cf. vi. 20), then he will never dare come into a slavish dependence upon men; but he must in every condition, in
24 which his call found him, through the fulfilment of his duties, serve God alone and thereby abide with Him.

While the Apostle could leave it to unmarried men and to widows to decide, whether they, according to the presentation of the matter in vii. 8, 9, wished to marry or not, it became a more difficult matter if a father or his representative was to decide whether a virgin over whom he had parental authority was to marry or not; for in this case he bore the responsibility for her future
25 fate. For this case, however, the Apostle had neither a command of the Lord, as in v. 10; nor could he deduce an Apostolic injunction from such a command, as he did in v. 12, nor could he give one of himself as in v. 17. He could only express a subjective judgment on the matter, although he could nevertheless remind them,
26 that he had received from Christ the grace of meriting belief. But his opinion is this, that the approaching distresses, which he expects with the coming of the last

namely, that it is good for a man ¹to be as he is. (27) Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. (28) But shouldest thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh: and I would spare you. (29) But this I say, brethren, the time ²is shortened, that henceforth both those that have

¹ Gr. *so to be*. ² Or, *is shortened henceforth, that both those, &c.*

times, will make it clear how good for mankind the principle is, which is contained in the preceding discussion. If the Lord has Himself forbidden every dissolution of marriage when it has once been consummated, it seems then that, according to the rule that everybody is to remain in the station in which his call found him, it is a simple conclusion, that he, too, who is in the unmarried state is not to seek marriage. But this is not a 27
divine command. For this reason it is not a sin to marry, not even for a virgin. But the circumstances of those times are such that these distresses of the last times will bring upon them heavy oppression in their bodily life, if these find them in the married estate, as Jesus had already stated in Matt. xxiv. 19. For this reason it is only from consideration for them, if he, in order to spare them these troubles, should advise them to remain unmarried. But in itself this advice has a deeper reason. If the period 28
of time up to the return of the Lord and with this to the last times in general, is so shortened, as certainly appears to be the case according to Matt. xxiv. 22, then this can have only the one object of admonishing us during the intervening times to rid ourselves of earthly things and to prepare for the end. If we must then still have a wife as though we did not have her, we only thereby burden ourselves with the heavy duty of freeing ourselves inwardly from the union that has just been contracted. Just as pleasure and pain as such are really 29

VII, 30-34] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

wives may be as though they had none ; (30) and those that weep, as though they wept not ; and those that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and those that buy as though they possessed not ; (31) and those that used the world, as not using it to the full : for the fashion of this world passeth away. (32) But I would have you to be free from cares. He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord : (33) but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his ¹ wife, (34)

¹ Some ancient authorities read *wife*. And there is a difference also between the wife and the virgin. She that is unmarried is careful, &c.

- 80 not felt if they pass by rapidly, thus, too, a possession that we have gained is really no possession if it is taken
81 away at once, and the use of worldly possession is no real use, since the form of the present world is already at the point of being changed, if the end, with which a new heaven and a new earth are to come, is so near.
- 82 But marriage involves us also in an abundance of earthly cares, which interfere with our compliance with the one great duty that is needful. It is accordingly only the wish to rid us of cares as much as possible, when Paul advises to remain single. The single man has only to care for the concerns of the Lord. The
83 married man has first of all to provide for all kinds of earthly things, in order to please his wife, and, because as a Christian he is first of all to be concerned for the cause of the Lord, he is accordingly divided in his
84 interests. In the case of the widow and the virgin, it is further to be added, that not only their spiritual life, but also their bodily life, can be entirely placed in the service of the Lord and be dedicated to Him alone only if they remain unmarried. In married life, on the other hand, the latter must be made subject to the husband, and in the times of pregnancy, as also when bound by the duties of motherhood, the subjection to the service of the Lord is largely interfered with. In general, the married woman has many kinds of

and is divided, So also the woman that is unmarried and the virgin is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. (35) And this I say for your own profit; not that I may cast a ¹snare upon you, but for that which is seemly, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. (36) But if any man thinketh that he behaveth himself unseemly toward his ¹virgin daughter, if she be past the

¹ Or, *constraint*. Gr. *noose*.

² Or, *virgin*.(omitting daughter).

earthly cares, if she, as she should do, desires to please her husband. Still once again the Apostle emphasizes 35 that everything that has been said in favor of remaining unmarried is to be considered only as a piece of good advice, which is given for a person's own good, as it is his purpose to make it easier for those who are not married in the time of the last distresses to devote themselves entirely to the Lord. He does not intend by this to force them to accept his advice; but all this is only to serve the purpose of leading them on the way to proper actions and to a persevering service of the Lord, from which they can be withdrawn by nothing. Only after these discussions Paul takes up a special case, in which they had asked for his advice. He is to decide if a father or his representative is to give a virgin in marriage. Evidently he had been told that 36 fear was entertained lest they would be treating the virgin unbecomingly, as she was already passed beyond the usual period for marriage, if her natural need for sexual intercourse should not be gratified, and thus she would readily be led to fornication. The Apostle decides the case in this sense, that if he really has the firm conviction from the natural disposition of his daughter that there was a tendency in this direction, he is to do as he evidently desired to do and to give his daughter in marriage. He does not thereby commit a sin, and

VII, 37-39] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

flower of her age, and if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry. (37) But he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own ¹ virgin *daughter*, shall do well. (38) So then both he that giveth his own ¹ virgin *daughter* in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not in marriage shall do better. (39) A wife is bound for so long a time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be ² dead, she is free

¹ Or, *virgin* (omitting daughter).

² Gr. *fallen asleep*. See Acts 7. 60

the virgin and the man who desires her may be married. But for similar cases he adds, that if a person is
 37 fully convinced of the advantages of remaining unmarried, and circumstances offer no compulsion over him, but he can act fully according to his will, and he really desires that the virgin, of whom he has control, shall abide in her unmarried estate, he can do this.
 38 The conclusion accordingly is, that he who gives his virgin in marriage does well; and if, in the circumstances, this is not contrary to his conviction and there is no compulsion in circumstances, he does not give her in marriage, he will, according to the conviction of the Apostle, do still better.

The Apostle further adds a few words concerning the remarriage of widows. The question had been covered in v. 8 and v. 34, and a specific question on this point must have been put to him. The Apostle pro-
 39 ceeds from the simple proposition, that the wife is only during the lifetime of the husband bound to him by law, and accordingly after his death she has full liberty of marrying anybody she pleases. But he adds the one indispensable condition, namely, that the marriage be consummated in the Lord, which makes a mixed marriage (with an unbelieving husband) absolutely forbidden. But in this connection he is bound to add, that it would be more blessed, i. e. more conducive

to be married to whom she will ; only in the Lord. (40) But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment : and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

VIII Now concerning things sacrificed to idols : We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth

to her inner happiness and more satisfactory, if she re- 40
mains what she has been since the death of her husband,
namely, a widow. But this is, however, only his
opinion. But this opinion deserves to be considered,
since he thinks that he has received the Spirit of God,
and this Spirit guides him in the utterance of his judg-
ments. Evidently some people of the opposite opinion
had appealed for their enlightenment by the Holy Spirit,
which he, too, certainly did not lack.

The third part of this epistle is to treat of meat sac- 1
rificed to idols. It appears that the Apostle had been
asked about this subject, because there were different
ideas on the subject prevailing in Corinth. It seems
that some had favored the idea that the meat of sacri-
fices to idols was to be regarded and be eaten exactly
as other meat, on the plea that their superior
knowledge of the nature of the idols warranted this.
Paul antagonizes such arrogance. Knowledge is not
the prerogative of certain individuals. The Christians
all know that they have knowledge, and the enlighten-
ment by the Holy Ghost is an essential part of the
redemptive life. And knowledge, moreover, in the
sense of a special endowment, is not even an uncondi-
tional advantage, because this easily leads to spiritual
pride. Love, on the other hand, is a perfect advantage,
since it is not its nature to bestow upon ourselves a special
value, but to advance others spiritually. With this it has
from the outset been pointed out, that in our conduct in
this matter, not our knowledge, but our love, is to be the

VIII, 2-5] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

up, but love ¹edifieth. (2) If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know ; (3) but if any man loveth God, the same is known by him. (4) Concerning therefore the things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is *anything* in the world, and that there is no God but one. (5) For though there be that are called gods,

² Gr. *buildeth up*.

2 deciding factor. With the higher knowledge it happens only too easily that conceit on account of what we know puts in its appearance. And yet if a man thinks that he has learned to know something so well that he now has completed this knowledge, he has not learned to know anything as we should. For the consciousness of the limitations of our knowledge is a part of all true knowledge; and for this reason all knowledge that claims to be perfect is no true knowledge. But there is no higher goal for love than
8 the love of God. And while the higher knowledge ever leads us to make a show of it before others, love, even if it has attained the highest stage, can never be consumed by anxiety for recognition, because it is sure of the highest recognition. For our election is based on the divine foreknowledge, and God elects those whom He has foreseen as those who would love Him (Rom. viii. 28, 29). Only after these preliminary statements does Paul again take up the real theme of this part of
4 his letter. This he does by stating more accurately, that the subject before him is the eating of the meat of idol sacrifices. Here, too, he first states, that it is generally known by Christians that in the world which God has created there can be no other god than the One who has created it; and that accordingly there are no such divine beings as the heathen worship in
5 their idols. But it must not be overlooked, that there are really in heaven and on earth superhuman beings, who do not in reality deserve the name of divinities which

whether in heaven or on earth ; as there are gods many, and lords many ; (6) yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him ; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. (7) Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge : but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as *of* a thing sacrificed

the Gentiles give to them ; but as the Scriptures themselves speak of many gods and of many lords (cf. Deut. x. 17 ; Ps. cxxxvi. 2, 3), there are nevertheless such creatures as can be so called. For us Christians indeed 6 there is but one God, who has become our Father in Christ, because He is the Foundation of all things, and we are destined for His service and for His glory. In the same way we have but one divine Lord, and that is Jesus Christ, through whom all things have come into existence, because the world was created through Him and through Him we are what we are, namely, the creatures and servants of God.

But this is a point on which all do not have the true 7 knowledge. Some have been accustomed from the time they were heathen to consider the superhuman beings, whom the heathen worship in the idols, as divine beings, and not only as so-called gods. In their eyes these are real divinities, although hostile to the *one* God ; and they accordingly consider the meat of the animals that are sacrificed to them as meat dedicated to these false gods, and accordingly they are afraid that by eating of this meat they will take part in the idolatry of the heathen. Even if this idea be false, yet their consciences are weak, because they are easily disturbed by the thought of a wrong which they believe to have committed. If, therefore, they eat the meat of these sacrifices with the consciousness that they thereby participate in idolatry, their consciences will be polluted by the sense of guilt, and all actions contrary to con-

VIII, 8-10] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. (8) But food will not ¹ commend us to God: neither, if we eat not, ²are we the worse; nor, if we eat, ³are we the better. (9) But take heed lest by any means this ³ liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak. (10) For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his

¹ Gr. *present*.

² Gr. *do we lack*.

³ Gr. *do we abound*.

science are sins. But for the more liberal-minded, among whom Paul, on the basis of v. 5, 6, counts himself, it is a settled fact that any food, be it the meat of sacrifice or ordinary meat, will not change our standing in the judgment of God, as though our eating or drinking had any influence on His judgment. But from this it first of all follows, that abstaining from eating will bring us no harm, as though thereby a lack on our part of pleasing God would be shown forth. For this reason also the eating of what we consider as permitted can be refrained from without harm: for eating cannot
8 make us any more pleasing to God. Especially for the more liberal-minded to eat or not to eat is then a matter of perfect indifference from the standpoint of morality. This proposition the Apostle establishes at the outset, because at this place, as in Rom. xiv., he intends to emphasize the principle, that when there is an antagonizing conviction, the stronger one can, for the sake of the weaker, refrain from using this liberty; but the weaker cannot, on account of his conscience, follow the example of the stronger.

9 The duty of the more liberal-minded accordingly consists in taking care that the option which they have of eating sacrifice meat as common meat, does not furnish the occasion for misleading the weak to act contrary to their conscience. The Apostle presupposes the case that a man who knows that by the eating of such sacrificial meat he could not pollute himself and
10 commit the sin of idolatry, actually takes part in such

conscience, if he is weak, ¹ be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? (11) For ² through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died. (12) And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. (13) Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.

¹ Gr. *be builded up*.

² Gr. *in*.

a sacrificial meal in the temple of the idols. Paul later on disapproves of this for other reasons; but here he only draws attention to the uncharitable and therefore misleading way in which the liberal-minded makes a show of his superior knowledge. A weak brother, in order not to appear inferior to the stronger, could easily be misled against his conscience to eat of the meat of these sacrifices. It may, indeed, appear as though his conscience was only being thereby better educated, as he discards the idea that this eating is a sinful deed. But as his conviction has not been really changed thereby—he, only for the sake of outward appearances, has denied this conviction—this is really only ruining his conscience through a deed contrary to conscience, and this will lead to his destruction. But if in this way the weaker, through the knowledge 11 of the stronger, is led to eternal destruction, then the purpose of Christ to save him from destruction through His death has been frustrated, and that, too, in the case of the brother whom the stronger ought to have helped along on the way to redemption. This is 12 not only a sin against the brother, if his conscience has in this way been mortally wounded, but a sin against Christ Himself. For this reason the Apostle would 13 rather abstain from all eating of meat for all times, than give his brother occasion to sin. He is ready to do this, although, as far as he is concerned, he is free from all obligation to abstain, out of consideration for

IX Am I not free? am I not an apostle? have I not seen
Jesus our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? (2)
If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for

others, from what, in his conviction, his right entitles him. Only love compels him, as it should compel the liberal-minded, to give up this freedom for the sake of the weaker brother.

- 1 How he is ready to act in this individual case illustrates the principle of his whole official career. For this reason he emphasizes the fact that he is not only a free man, but also an Apostle, and can therefore claim special rights, in order to show that this refraining from his rights also characterizes him in the performance of his official work. But he bases his Apostolic right upon the fact that he had seen Jesus, our exalted Lord, exactly as the original Apostles had done, namely, when He appeared to him on the way to Damascus; and that it is a result of this Apostolic office, that Jesus Christ has blessed his preaching with success, and that this has resulted in the organization
- 2 of the Corinthian congregation. Why Paul emphasizes his Apostolic authority so much becomes clear at once when he begins to speak of others who will not recognize this authority. As he distinguishes these from the readers whom he addresses, he can have in mind only those disciples of Christ who have forced their way into the congregation, and of whom we have heard already in i. 12; iv. 18, 19. He is perfectly willing to acknowledge that he is not an Apostle for them, for he has not been sent to them, and he has not founded their faith. But for the Corinthians he certainly is such; for the Corinthian congregation is the confirmation of his Apostolic office, as the establishment of congregations was his special Apostolic gift (cf. iii. 10).

I CORINTHIANS

[IX, 3-6]

the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. (3) My defence to them that examine me is this. (4) Have we no right to eat and to drink? (5) Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a ¹believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? (6) Or I only and

¹ Gr. *sister*.

But it is the Lord who, by giving him the power to 3 establish this congregation, has, as it were, impressed the seal of approval upon his call as Apostle. If anybody wants to call him to account because of his Apostolic calling, it will suffice to refer to this fact. But if he is an Apostle, then he has not proclaimed the gospel to them on his own authority, but at the command of Christ. But in this case he has also the same right that others who have been called to preach the gospel possess, namely, to receive his support from the congregation. In this way he prepares the way for the proof that in his Apostolic career he has been at all times ready to suffer want for the sake of the brethren, mentioning first the fact that he refrained from taking any support from the congregation.

The Apostle begins by first expressly determining the rights of the preacher of the gospel to receive his support from the congregation in which he is laboring. He and those like him certainly have the right to eat. 4 But if they are to devote all their time and strength to preaching the gospel, the congregation is in duty bound to furnish them with what they need for life. He expressly appeals to the fact, that the other Apostles and 5 the brothers of the Lord, when they are on mission journeys, ever insist on the right of having their wives, whom they take with them, supported. In particular he refers to Cephas, who according to i. 12, had been in Corinth, and to whom evidently this right had been accorded. Or, are he and Barnabas, who probably had the same trade, to be the only ones who have not the right to 6

Barnabas, have we not a right to forbear working? (7) What soldier ever serveth at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? (8) Do I speak these things after the manner of men? or saith not the law also the same? (9) For it is written in the law of Moses, ¹Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth, (10) or saith he it ²assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written: because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, *to thresh* in hope of partaking. (11) If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?

¹ Dt. xxv. 4.

² Or, *altogether*.

give up their trade in order to be able to engage in the work of the gospel exclusively? He reminds them of
 7 the fact that no one engages in military services and provides for his own pay; as also that the workman in the vineyard, and the shepherd receive a part of the proceeds of their work. But he by no means intends to establish his right solely upon the customs of human
 8 society. They are not to think that the divinely-given law is silent on this subject. What is written in
 9 Deut. xxv. 4, is not intended to teach merely that God takes care of the oxen. What God has said in the Old Testament has on all occasions been said for our sake, as the documentary record of the preparatory redemption can be only intended for those who are to live
 10 to see the consummation of this redemption in Christ. This word must accordingly have a deeper meaning, which is also of importance for us, and this meaning it has. For in this the principle has been set up that he who plows and he who threshes are to do their work in the hope of receiving a part of the harvest. If Paul and his companions have been sowing the seed of the
 11 word in Corinth, from which has sprung up the blessings that the Spirit has worked in the believers, then certainly it is nothing extraordinary if they receive

(12) If others partake of *this* right over you, do not we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the ¹gospel of Christ. (13) Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? (14) Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the ¹gospel should live of the

¹ See marginal note on ch. 4. 15.

what they need for their bodies, as the harvest, as it were, of what they have sown. Those others (v. 7.) who here plainly appear as persons who were preaching to the congregation, actually make use of this right of being supported by the congregation. How much more have those who have labored in founding the congregation a right to claim this? And yet Paul and his associates had never made these demands, and to the present day bore whatever trouble and work arose from this condition of affairs, for the sole purpose of putting no hindrance in the way of the gospel. It could easily be 12 possible that support of the three missionaries would be a heavy burden for the congregation, which consisted chiefly of poor people, and that this would prevent many from joining them, or would put their activity under the suspicion of avarice. The Apostle again returns to 13 the statement of their full right to this. He reminds them of the fact, that those who have to do with the sanctuaries receive their support from the sanctuary, i. e. from the shewbread, the first-fruits, etc., just as those priests who are regularly engaged at the sacrificial altar receive a portion of the animals that are sacrificed there. He finally refers to the express word of the 14 Lord (Matt. x. 10; cf. Luke x. 7, 8), which directed the Apostles whom He had sent out to accept those things that were given them by those to whom they brought the message of the gospel.

And yet, as far as he was personally concerned, Paul

¹gospel. (15) But I have used none of these things : and I write not these things that it may be so done in my case ; for *it were* good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. (16) For if I ²preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of ; for necessity is laid upon me ; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. (17) For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward : but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me. (18) What then is my reward ? That, when I ²preach the ¹gospel, I may make the ¹gospel without charge, so as not to use to the

¹ See marginal note on ch. 4. 15.

² See marginal note on ch. 1. 17.

15 had made no use whatever of this right, and now too he does not refer to this so fully in order to make use of this right later on. He would rather die than be deprived of the boast that he had preached the
 16 gospel without any remuneration. For the preaching of the gospel in itself is nothing of which he would boast ; it is a duty devolving upon him and he would only be calling down upon himself the
 17 judgment of God if he did not fulfil this duty. If he proclaimed the gospel voluntarily he could claim payment for this, as the workman does according to iii. 8 in the praise which the Lord of the work bestows (iv. 5). But if this is not the case, as he just declared, this is the consequence of the fact, that he has been entrusted with a stewardship (cf. iv. 1.) which makes this work a duty. What, then, is left for him, if
 18 he nevertheless wants to receive wages, but to go beyond the mere fulfilment of his duty in his services ? He must accordingly in his proclamation of the gospel do this without considering the cost to others, in order not to make use of the rights of support which he has by virtue of the fact that he is a preacher of the gospel. This self-sacrifice on his part is the only thing of which he can boast, and this praise no one shall destroy for him.

full my right in the ¹gospel. (19) For though I was free from all *men*, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. (20) And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law: (21) to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are with-

¹ See marginal note on ch. 4. 15.

From this surrender of his rights as an Apostle, Paul returns to the discussion of his liberty in general (cf. vs. 1), according to which he is not controlled in his actions by anybody, but follows his convictions exclusively. This liberty, too, he has voluntarily foregone and voluntarily become the slave of all, in order to win as many as possible to the faith and thereby to redemption. He had become a Jew in order to win the Jews, 20 as he himself explains in the parallel statement. They were under a law, namely, that law to which they were bound by circumcision. He, as far as he was concerned, had become free from all legal obligations; but wherever he labored among them, he had submitted himself to their legal order of life in order to avoid giving them any offense and thus to win them to salvation. However he was in his personal life not free from the law of God, since as a Christian he had been compelled to remain in 21 that state or condition in which his vocation found him (cf. vii. 18 sqq.), and accordingly as a circumcised man he adhere to his legal obligations. But the law of must Christ to which he was bound, commanded him out of love for the Gentiles, who lived without a law, whenever he labored among them, to cast off these obligations and to live in conformity with their freer customs of life in order to win them. But among Christian brethren he had at all times strictly observed the rule, which in chapt. viii. he had given to the liberal-minded. He has

out law. (22) To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. (23) And I do all things for the gospel's sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof. (24) Know ye not that they that run in a ² race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. (25) And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all

¹ See marginal note on ch. 4. 15.

² Gr. *race-course*.

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- 22 on account of the weak refrained from making use of his freedom, in order to give them no offense, and in this way he has become weak, who abstains from all that would in any way cause them scruples of conscience, and
- 23 thus he would win them for salvation. He accordingly, in the fullest sense of the word, can claim for himself that he had become all things to all men, in order to lead them to salvation and thereby deliver them from destruction. But in the end he has done all this for his own sake, so that he could partake of all the promises of the gospel which he preached. For as each one must show fidelity in the service of God, so must he be faithful in the performance of his calling, which demands of him that for love's sake he refrain from using his liberty.
- 24 But in demanding this same self-denial of all others, he asks nothing but what is necessary for making easier the attainment of the goal towards which they are struggling in their Christian calling. God has placed as this goal the consummation of salvation, and the entire life of a Christian is nothing more than the struggle for the realization of His promise by the constant fulfilment of Christian duty, which cannot be perfected without self-denial and self-abnegation. In this way a prize has been set for the contestant in a race; and how difficult it is to earn this is apparent from the fact that only one from among all the racers attains
- 25 it. Hence it is a matter of importance for them, that they strive earnestly to secure the prize of victory,

I CORINTHIANS

[IX, 26-27]

things. Now they *do it* to receive a corruptible crown ; but we an incorruptible. (26) I therefore so run, as not uncertainly ; so ¹ fight I, as not beating the air. (27) but I ² buffet my body, and bring it into bondage : lest by any means, after that I ³ have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.

¹ Gr. *box.*

² Gr. *bruise.* Lk. 18. 5.

³ Or, *have been a herald.*

which awaits them at their goal. The Corinthians were well acquainted with the rules governing such racing contests as these were celebrated annually on the isthmus. Hence the Apostle can refer in detail to these 26 rules. They knew how the contestants, by long and strict abstinence, in every respect, prepared themselves for the decisive day ; and they could only rejoice if the self-denials which they underwent for the sake of the brethren gave them an opportunity to practise this virtue, without which it was impossible to attain the goal. And the former may only secure a perishable crown of victory, but they one that is imperishable. Because the Apostle, by abstaining from the use of his own rights and his own freedom exercises himself constantly in self-denial, he is able to engage in the contest for the heavenly crown in accordance with the rules of this contest. As the racers are not able to run without 27 a safe direction, but must keep their eyes fixed on the goal ; as the boxer dare not strike the air, but must with every blow strike his antagonist, so the Apostle sees his adversary clearly before him and strikes him with powerful blows of his fist. Only in this way can he overpower the body in its sinful lusts, until he controls it as his slave. For this he needs frequent and also painful practises in self-denial. But this is necessary in order that, while as a herald he proclaims the rules of the contest to others, he may not be found as not approved and so fail to secure the prize. He does not require them to practise any self-denials to which he does not submit himself. But how necessary this exercise is for

X For I would not brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea ; (2) and were all baptized ¹ unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea ; (3) and did all eat the same spiritual food ; (4)

¹ Gr. *into*.

them, too, is seen by a glance at the dangers which present themselves in the life of a Christian.

- 1 The Apostle desires that the Gentile Christians in Corinth should not be unacquainted with the history of the fathers, who have also become their fathers, since they had been received into the saving communion of Israel (cf. Rom. xi. 16). He again and again brings it prominently forward that these fathers had undergone the same experience of grace as his readers had. When under the protection of the cloud they passed through the Red Sea (cf. Ex. xiv. 19, 20, 21, 22), trusting to the leadership of Moses as the mediator of their deliverance, they in doing this also experienced the blessings of redemption, as we experienced these in baptism, since they, as it were, were baptized unto Moses in the water-
- 8 loaded cloud and in the volumes of the water. When they in the desert ate of the wonderful manna (cf. Ex. xvi. 14-15) and drank of the water from the rock (Ex. xvii., Num. xx) they thereby received a spiritual nourishment such as we receive in the Lord's Supper, because this miraculous nourishment of the body at the
- 4 same time strengthened their trust in God. As the Jewish tradition interpreted the repetition of this miraculous water by the statement, that a rock followed the Israelites in their journey through the desert in order to be always at hand when they were in need of water, Paul interprets this rock as of a divine and spiritual character, typical of Christ. The latter accordingly had been the Mediator of the Old Covenant, as He is the Mediator of the present era of redemption,

I CORINTHIANS

[X, 5-8]

and did all drink the same spiritual drink : for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them : and the rock was ¹Christ. (5) Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased : for they were overthrown in the wilderness. (6) Now ²these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. (7) Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them ; as it is written, ³The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. (8) Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in

¹ Or, *the Christ*. Comp. Heb. 11. 26.

² Or, *in these things they become figures of us*.

³ Ex. xxxii. 6.

so that this spiritual drinking proceeded from Him in the same way as our Lord's Supper does. But not- 5 withstanding these great manifestations of God's grace, God did not have pleasure in the majority of those in the wilderness. The entire generation that came forth out of Egypt, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, were not allowed to enter the promised land, for they were slain in the desert (cf. Num. xiv. 16, 29, 30). All of these events, according to the providential purposes of Israel's history, have become examples for us, and 6 we may learn from them, that we can experience the greatest manifestations of God's grace and yet not attain to the consummation of redemption. They should not, as the Israelites, long for the fleshpots of Egypt (cf. Ex. xvi. 3), that is, look back longingly to the unbridled and sinful pleasures of their heathen life. They should not, by taking part in the heathen sacrificial meals, participate in idolatry, as the Israelites did on one occasion, when they celebrated such a feast in honor of the 7 golden calf (Ex. xxxii. 6). This is the chief of his special warnings, because it points to the exhortations that follow. On the other hand the next refers to the fornication of which the Apostle had spoken in the second part of this letter. The Apostle in warning words recalls the fact, that the fornication of the 8 Israelites with the daughters of Moab had brought down

one day three and twenty thousand. (9) Neither let us make trial of the ¹ Lord, as some of them made trial, and perished by the serpents. (10) Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. (11) Now these things happened unto them ² by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the end of the ages are come. (12) Wherefore let him that thinketh he

¹ Some ancient authorities read *Christ*.

² Gr. *by way of figure*.

9 upon them a terrible punishment from God (cf. Num. xxv. 9). In the statement about the tempting of God he is probably thinking of Num. xxi. 4 sqq., and of the dissatisfaction of so many in Corinth with their present condition, which offered them no substitute for the
 10 excesses of their heathen life. But as the Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron on account of the judgment that destroyed the band of Korah (Num. xvii. 8), he also is afraid of the dissatisfaction of the congregation on account of his strong condemnation of the man guilty of incest. The plague which at that time was inflicted upon the people, he, after the analogy of 1 Chron. xxi. 12, ascribes to an angel of God whom he names in accordance with his mission of de-
 11 struction. He further recalls the fact, that all of these judgments of punishment over Israel had been sent as warnings. They are recorded in the Old Testament, so that they can instruct us by warning us against the sins through which similar judgments would fall upon us. In this it is presupposed, that the entire Old Testament has a message for those who have lived to see the time of redemption. For all the ages of the past point to those who live in the time of redemption; and for this reason the Old Testament, which reports these events,
 12 thinks constantly of these people. The Apostle closes with the admonition, that he who, in view of his experiences of the grace which he has received, thinks that he is firm enough to resist all temptation, should care-

standeth take heed lest he fall. (13) There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.

fully see that he falls not. The fathers even had not been protected by such experiences of grace from moral falls, and they were therefore destroyed.

The first warning of the Apostle purposed urging upon the Corinthians that they themselves should not, by participating in the heathen sacrifices of feasts, expose themselves to the soul-destroying dangers that inevitably accompany them. Until the present time 13 no temptations had come upon them except those proceeding from men. In this is contained the thought that Satanic temptations are also possible. In the former they certainly had reasons to hope that they would stand. For in the end it is God who permits these to come over them, and who commands them to live among the people who are hostile to God, from which people these temptations proceed. He, however, who by calling us has given us the assurance that He would lead us to the goal of the consummation of salvation, will in His faithfulness also take care of us, so that we shall not be tempted beyond our strength. He will, together with the temptations, also bring about a timely end of these, so that we are enabled to bear them, and will not be permitted to fall. But this assurance the readers have not, if they themselves go into conditions of life in which Satanic temptations come over them, in which they cannot comfort themselves with the thought that God would help them. For this reason he begs of them most earnestly, as is shown by his affectionate address, that they would take no part what-

(14) Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. (15) I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. (16) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a ¹communion of the blood of Christ? The ²bread which we break, is it not a ³communion of the body of Christ? (17) ⁴seeing that we, who

¹ Or, participation in.

² Or, loaf.

³ Or, seeing that there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body.

- 14 ever in the service of idols among the Gentiles. For this always took place when they were invited by their heathen neighbors to the great sacrificial banquets. For as these were celebrated in honor of the idols, Paul regards the excesses and licentiousness that necessarily were connected with these as proceeding from evil spirits, which in reality are worshipped in these images, and which certainly must be present at such idolatrous festivities. If in this connection he maintains that taking part in heathen sacrificial feasts
- 15 is soul-destroying communion with evil spirits, then the readers, who deem themselves wise, certainly must be able to judge of what he is saying. He is only saying what they themselves can examine by the analogy of the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- 16 He appeals in this connection to what is certainly known to them, namely, that the cup of blessing, which in the Lord's Supper, after the example set by the Lord, was consecrated by the prayer pronounced over it, is the means of communion with the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross, just as the bread, which was broken, after the similar example in a solemn way, is the communion with the body of Christ which was given into death for us. He proceeds from this, that it lies in the essence of the Lord's Supper that it has the power of bringing about communion, and that it unites all those who take part in it into the organic unity of a
- 17 body. But if the one bread which is eaten in the Supper is the medium which effects this communion, then

I CORINTHIANS

[X, 18-20]

are many, are one ¹ bread, one body : for we all partake ² of the one ¹ bread. (18) Behold Israel after the flesh : have not they that eat the sacrifices communion with the altar ? (19) What say I then ? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything ? (20) But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not

¹ Or. *loaf*.

² Gr. *from*.

it cannot be common bread. For the reason that it brings about that common participation in the body of Christ it is able to join those who take part in the Supper into the unity of a body. But the Apostle at the 18 same time directs attention to the people of Israel, who are united by bodily descent, and of whom those parts which have remained in unbelief to-day yet celebrate their sacrificial feasts. In connection with these feasts, those who participate are brought into a communion with the altar by eating certain parts that have been offered there. But as God, according to Ex. xx. 24, has consecrated the altar to be a place of blessing, where He would come to His people in order to bless them, so the Jewish sacrificial meal also transfers one into this blessed communion with God. The Apostle 19 himself asks what he intends to prove by this. It is impossible that, in contradiction to viii. 4, it is his purpose to prove that the meat sacrificed to idols is offered to real divinities, and that accordingly such divinities as the Gentiles imagine that they worship really exist. But there are evil spirits, through whose deception the heathen are misled into the service of idols, and under the supremacy of which the heathen live. To these 20 they sacrifice when they imagine they are sacrificing to their gods, and into communion with these their sacrificial feasts bring them, as the Christian Lord's Supper brings people into the communion of the body and the blood of Christ, and as the Jewish sacrificial meal does into communion with the place of blessing at the altar.

to God : and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. (21) Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons : ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons. (22) Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy ? are we stronger than he ?

(23) All things are lawful ; but not all things are expedient.

Since those evil spirits are present in the heathen sacrificial meal, and as Satanic temptations proceed from these, he cannot wish that they take part in these, and in this way come into communion with the evil spirits and become their associates. It certainly is clear that it is not possible at the same time to drink of
21 the cup of the Lord in the Last Supper, and also of the cup that is dedicated to the evil spirits, and that was handed around at these heathen sacrificial feasts and constituted the main feature of the celebration. Nor is it possible, at the same time, to sit at the table which our Lord has provided for us and also at the table which, because there the meat that is dedicated to the
22 evil spirits is eaten, belongs to these evil spirits. Or, if we do this, we thereby enkindle the jealousy of our Lord Jesus, who cannot possibly allow that we at the same time are subject to evil spirits and to Himself. We certainly are not stronger than He, so that we could defy the punishment that His enkindled jealousy will necessarily bring upon us.

23 The Apostle concludes his discussion concerning the eating of the meat of idol sacrifices by returning to the principle of Christian liberty (vi. 12), which was perhaps applied by the more liberal-minded to this case also. Now the Apostle of himself starts out from the qualifying addition, which was at that place added with a very improper application. For it is clear from the preceding how little the eating of this

I CORINTHIANS

[X, 24-27]

All things are lawful ; but not all things ¹ edify. (24) Let no man seek his own, but *each* ² his neighbor's good. (25) Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake ; (26) for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. (27) If one of them that believe not biddeth you *to a feast*, and ye are disposed to go ; whatsoever is set before

¹ Gr. *build up*.

² Gr. *the other's*. See Rom. 13. 8.

meat, which in itself is permitted, is a wise action, if a person attends a heathen sacrificial banquet for this purpose. But the Apostle, for his part, further adds that not everything that is allowable tends also to edification, i. e. to the advancement of the Christian brethren, but rather, as has been shown, it tends to harm them, if a man without further consideration makes use of his liberty. But as none are to seek what is their own, but that which is another's, it is rather each one's duty to abstain from the eating of sacrificial meat, if a brother could be harmed by such eating. By this 24 nothing that he considers his right is to be forbidden to him who is more liberal-minded. In the slaughter-house, beside other meat, sacrificial meat is offered for sale. He can eat anything he may buy here without 25 questioning further whether it is sacrificial meat. His conscience does not demand this ; for even if it were sacrificial meat, this would not convict him of sin. For 26 him it is settled by Ps. xxiv. 1, that the earth and all that therein is belongs to God. The animal, too, which has been slaughtered for the sacrifice, surely belongs to Him, and the meat thereof can be eaten as a gift of God. In 27 the same way if a liberal-minded Christian is invited to a meal by an unbeliever, he can unhesitatingly eat of what is placed before him without first finding out whether, on account of his conscience, there be some sacrificial meat on the table. Certainly the Apostle adds in connection with such an invitation : " If ye are disposed to go." For even if such a private banquet is not so dan-

you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake. (28) But if any man say unto you, This hath been offered in sacrifice, eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake : (29) conscience, I say, not thine own, but the other's ; for why is my liberty judged by another conscience ? (30) ¹ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks ? (31) Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or

¹ Or, *if I by grace partake.*

gerous to the soul as a sacrificial feast, it is nevertheless possible that on such an occasion many things may occur that would prove a temptation. But the case becomes an entirely different one if, perchance, a weak brother is also present at such a banquet, who perhaps for certain reasons thinks that he could not decline the invitation, but who is most carefully on his guard lest he should be compelled to eat sacrificial meat. If such a person has then discovered that the meat placed
28 before them is sacrificial, and he warns his fellow Christian, then the liberal-minded is not to eat of it for the sake of him who has drawn his attention to the matter, lest he should tempt this brother to do something against his conscience. In this case it is of course necessary to refrain from eating the meat of the sacrifices for conscience' sake, not on account of his own conscience, but on account of the conscience of the
29 other, which forbids him to eat. For what is permitted or forbidden by one man's conscience is not to be decided by that of another. The liberal-minded may not permit the liberty which his conscience gives him to be judged by another's conscience. For if he eat of the sacrificial meat with thanksgiving, then nobody, who may regard this as wrong dare charge him with having
30 acted contrary to conscience, because the thanksgiving shows that he did it with a good conscience. He could not render thanks for food of which he is con-
31 vinced that it is not permitted. With food and with

I CORINTHIANS

[XI, 1-2]

whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (32) Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the church of God: (33) even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of the **XI** many that they may be saved. (1) Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ.

(2) Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and

drink, as with everything else that he does, man must seek to honor God. But all eating with thanksgiving takes place to the honor of God. The sole matter of importance is that he causes offense to no one, whether non-Christian or Christian. If perchance he should 82 tempt the one to commit a sin, be he a Jew, to whom the eating of sacrificial meat was absolutely forbidden, and who takes occasion at this to defame the Christian as a man who disregards the command of God, or a Greek, who perhaps thinks that a Christian is doing this only because, out of consideration for his unbelieving neighbor, he disregards what has been forbidden him, then of course the liberal-minded Christian dare not eat. The same is the case if it causes offense to the congregation by misleading the weak in it to do what for conscience' sake they are not allowed to do. The Apostle again appeals to his own example, since 33 he, as has been shown, tries by his life to please all, but naturally not for selfish reasons, but because he thereby tries to effect the greatest amount of good to the greatest number, and especially the one good, that they may be delivered, and thereby saved. In this thing they are to imitate him, not because he is doing this, but because he thereby is imitating Christ in His self-denying life of love.

The fourth part of this letter deals with the abuses, 1 which have appeared in the congregational meetings. The Apostle begins by praising the Corinthians because 2

hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. (3)
But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head

they had in all things remembered him, for only in this way could they obey his admonitions to imitate him. This, too, he can praise, that they adhered to the 8 Christian customs which he has taught them. But he would like to discuss one matter concerning which he evidently had not yet spoken to them, namely, the veiling of the women in the congregational meetings. This was only one of the requirements of the chaste customs of the old world, and for this reason was regarded as something the propriety of which was self-evident. But the consciousness that in respect to religion they were on an equality with the men had caused the women to appear in the congregation, like the men, with uncovered heads. This was done partly through vanity. But the Apostle at once states the fundamental principle of the matter. For as Christianity never overthrows in any way the natural ordinances of moral life, so the fact that in a religious respect the woman is placed on an equality with the man cannot change the fact, that in the married estate, the man is the head of the woman. That this is interpreted in Christianity in an altogether different way from that practised in the ancient world, the Apostle indicates by asserting that Christ is the head of every man, be he married or unmarried. Accordingly in the government of the woman by the man a tyrannical supremacy is entirely out of the question, since he himself, in everything that he does, is dependent on Christ, and hence, too, his rule over the wife can be conducted only in this sense and according to the will of Christ. Finally, Paul points to the fact, that Christ Himself is under the supremacy of God, whose will He,

of Christ is God. (4) Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. (5) But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head ; for it is one and the same thing as if she

as He once did upon earth, is now carrying out in heaven, so that in the control of the wife by the husband in the Spirit of Christ the original ordinance of God is merely being carried out. If the husband would appear in the congregation with a covered head, 4 as the Jews when praying cover themselves with a head-covering, he would dishonor his head, because it would seem as if he could not dare to lift up his head boldly on account of some disgrace, which rested upon it, or on account of submission to others. The Apostle, however, takes up specially the case of the man leading in prayer in the public service or delivering a prophetic discourse. In this case, of course, it is impossible that the entire head should be covered ; but even if he throws back the covering and a portion of it is yet hanging down from the head, it amounts to the same thing. But Paul enters upon the discussion of this particular case, because evidently the women had laid aside the veil first, in order on their part to be able to lead in prayer or to speak in the public assembly. Paul absolutely forbids this on another ground. At this place it was not neces- 5 sary for him to dwell upon it, because no prohibition would be necessary so long as the woman remained veiled. He merely states, that if a woman, be she married or unmarried, appears with uncovered head, even if it be only for the purpose of public speaking, she dishonors her head, because she thereby puts herself on a level with the lewd women, who appear in public with shorn head. In his eyes the removal of the veil, by which the charms of the woman are exposed to the

were shaven. (6) For if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn : but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled. (7) For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God : but the woman is the glory of the man. (8) For the man is not of the woman ; but the woman of the man : (9) for neither was the man created for the woman ; but the woman for the man : (10) for this cause ought the woman to have a *sign*

6 public gaze, is a sign of shamelessness. He expressly emphasizes that the cutting short or the complete clipping of the hair on the part of public women is only one farther step in the attempt to allure men by their charms. And if this was universally regarded as disgraceful, then the laying aside of the veil that covered
7 the head could not be permissible. That the man is not compelled to cover his head, is founded on the fact that he bears the image of God in himself, since he has been appointed to be the ruler over the earth (Gen. i. 26), and God is thereby honored if this glory of the sovereignty of God is shown in his case. The man himself is also honored by the fact, that in the appearance of the wife this position of sovereignty is shown forth. For this reason he is not permitted to carry a head-covering, which is always a sign that he is not allowed boldly to raise his head in the presence of others.

8 But this difference between husband and wife is based
9 on the fact that the man did not come from the woman but the woman from the man (cf. Gen. ii. 21-22), and because according to Gen. ii. 18, man has not been created for the sake of the woman, but the woman for the sake
10 of the man. But for this very reason it is necessary that the woman is to carry upon her head a sign of her subordination to her husband, and this is the veil. Only in this way can the supremacy of the husband be seen in her case, while at the same time she adds to the

of authority on her head, because of the angels. (11) Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. (12) For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God. (13) Judge ye¹ in yourselves: is it seemly that a

¹ Or, *among*.

honor of her husband. It seems that thereby an altogether different purpose is assigned to the veiling, than was set forth in vs. 5, 6, where it was a mark of modesty. But the Apostle regards the modesty of the woman as perfectly secured only in her subjection to the husband, and therefore considers the desire for emancipation as a sign of shamelessness. He adds the fine statement, that even if the woman were not ashamed to deny her divinely ordained dependence upon her husband in public, she certainly ought to fear to do this before the angels of God, whom he, according to Ps. cxxxviii. 1, considers as present in the congregation. He, however, expressly makes mention of the 11 fact, that notwithstanding this subordination to the husband, it remains that in the living communion with Christ, there is neither wife nor husband, neither man nor woman, because both sexes have the same part in salvation. And this again corresponds exactly to the 12 natural order, according to which the woman has indeed, come from the man, but in turn man is always born from the woman, so that in the end both are on an equality. But both sides of the relation of man and wife come from God, who has founded them as a natural order. Finally the Apostle appeals to their own 13 sense of what is proper. In case they constituted a court by which the question was to be decided, they certainly must themselves concede, that it is not proper if in the act of prayer before God the woman appears without a veil, which, in the moment in which

woman pray unto God unveiled? (14) Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? (15) But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her : for her hair is given her for a covering. (16) But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

(17) But in giving you this charge I praise you not, that ye

she has to deal only with God, could have only the one purpose, of attracting the eyes of men to herself. For the order of nature itself, according to which man has
14 received shorter hair than the woman, teaches that
15 it is a disgrace for him to permit his hair to grow long, whereas, on the contrary, this is an honor to the woman, For the long, flowing hair that covers her charms is given, as it were, for a natural veil, in order
16 to hide these in modesty from the eyes of men. But if anybody feels justified in opposing all this, as the Apostle can ascribe an opposition in a matter so clear only to the desire for quarreling, he is to know, that he and those like him, do not have this custom, nor do the congregations of God, which certainly should be an authority for them. On such things they are not to quarrel, but these are to be decided by the simple sense of propriety.

17 Secondly, the Apostle discusses the abuses that have arisen in connection with the celebration of the so-called love feasts. In what he had previously said there had been no word of censure; but the praise expressed in v. 2 remained in full force. It has only been his purpose to give them instruction in a matter that evidently had not yet been discussed among them. But now a matter is mentioned on account of which he cannot praise them. The Apostle summarizes all that he has heard with reference to the abuses in the congregational meetings in the statement that these, in-

come together not for the better but for the worse. (18) For first of all, when ye come together ¹in the church, I hear that ²divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it. (19) For there must be also ³factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you. (20) When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper: (21) for in your eating each one taketh before *other* his own supper; and one is hungry, and another

¹ Or, *in congregation*.

² Gr. *schisms*.

³ Gr. *heresies*.

stead of serving the purpose of spiritual progress, had only given them occasion for wrong-doing. In the first place, he had heard that when they met for a congregational celebration, such as at the common meals, there were divisions among them. He will not out of 18 charity believe everything that has been told him concerning them, but some of it he must believe. For he certainly knows that worse things than such external divisions will take place. Divisions must take place, for 19 these are caused by differences in opinion, as these had in all probability been already caused by the pupils of Christ, or it was to be feared that this would be the case. That this is the case and that it cannot be otherwise was to be accounted for by altogether different reasons. But at any rate this condition serves also the purpose of making it evident, who among them are the approved and will not suffer themselves to be deprived of the faith of the congregation. For the present he is 20 to discuss that which makes it impossible to celebrate at the Lord's Supper in connection with their common meals, as was the custom, by the breaking of the bread and the consecration of the cup according to the example of the Lord in His last meal with His disciples. Instead 21 of waiting till all are assembled and then distributing equally what each one had brought, everybody took what he had brought, and ate this first. The consequence of this was that the rich indulged in abundance,

is drunken. (22) What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the ¹ church of God, and put them to shame that ² have not? What shall I say to you? ³ shall I praise you? In this I praise you not. (23) For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus

¹ Or, congregation.

³ Or, have nothing.

² Or, shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

while the poor, who had brought but little with them, did not have enough to satisfy their hunger. By this division between the rich and the poor not only the common character of the meal had been destroyed, but also its religious significance. Least of all could the drunken rich and the hungry poor be in a spiritual state to celebrate the Lord's Supper. In indignation 22 the Apostle asks, if they cannot eat and drink enough to satisfy their hunger at home. It certainly was a despising of the congregation of God, who had assembled for a religious purpose and whom they treated as though they were common table company. To this was added the lack of charity in that those who did not have anything to bring, and who accordingly counted upon receiving their share of what the wealthy brought, were disappointed in these expectations. In this matter the Apostle certainly could not praise them, but rather they deserved a severe censure.

23 This furnished occasion for a detailed discussion concerning the Lord's Supper, which the Apostle now gives. The history of the institution of the Supper was naturally well known to him and to his readers from the observance of the rite in the congregation. But Paul, who had not been present at the institution, had received from the Lord and through His Spirit a special revelation concerning its purpose and significance. This he had already communicated to his congregation, but he reminds them of this revelation in order to found upon it the sharp censures which he pronounces on the

I CORINTHIANS

[XI, 24-25]

in the night in which he was ¹ betrayed took bread ; (24) and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which ² is for you : this do in remembrance of me. (25)

¹ Or, *delivered up*.

² Many ancient authorities read *is broken for you*.

conduct of the Corinthians. The Lord Jesus during the time He was upon earth instituted this rite, and the deeply significant moment in which this took place stands in the sharpest antithesis to the profane sense in which in Corinth they undertook the celebration. The institution pointed to His impending death, with which this rite deals. The breaking of a bread which 24 had been consecrated by thanksgiving, with which the celebration, that was often called the Breaking of Bread (cf. Acts ii. 46), began, showed that this bread was to be distributed and to be eaten. The word, however, which Jesus spoke in connection with this, was meant to say, that it was His body which was to be broken in death like this bread, so that He could be appropriated as the One who had been given to them for their salvation. Although, as Evangelical tradition shows, the Apostles did not need any special injunction for the repetition of this act, because its very nature demanded this, Paul received the special revelation that this breaking of the bread, together with the thanksgiving and the statement of Jesus concerning its significance, is to be constantly repeated as a remembrance of Him. In the same way Jesus, after He had completed the 25 meal with the consecrated bread, upon which the custom was based of closing the love-feast with the breaking of the bread and the consecration of the cup, took the cup that was standing on the table and by a prayer of thanksgiving consecrated it for the common use of all. This cup He declared in His words of interpretation to be the mediator of the new covenant, but not in itself, but because of His blood, which alone as the

In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood : this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (26) For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. (27) Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. (28) But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. (29) For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh

means of atonement made the new covenant communion with God possible. And in the same way it had here been revealed to him, that this consecration of the cup in conjunction with the repetition of the words of interpretation, should be constantly repeated at the drink-
26 ing as a remembrance of Him whose death was declared in these words of interpretation in connection with this Supper until His return, with which the need for such a remembrance of the departed Lord would pass away In this bread then, according to the interpretation which Jesus Himself has given of this holy rite, we receive
27 the body of the Lord ; and indirectly with the consecrated cup, by drinking the wine that it contains, the New Covenant communion with God that has been made possible by the blood of Christ. He, then, who partakes of one or the other unworthily, i. e. in the profane spiritual state as the carousing Corinthians did, sins not only against these sacred symbols, but also against the body and the blood of the Lord Himself, by whom he will be punished.

28 For this reason we must carefully examine our-
29 selves before we go to partake of the Supper ; because by such eating and drinking, we only call down upon us the punishing judgment of God, if we eat and drink without discerning the body which we receive from the common bread with which it is received. It is not

I CORINTHIANS

[XI, 30-34]

judgment unto himself, if he ¹discern not the body. (30) For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. (31) But if we ²discerned ourselves, we should not be judged. (32) But ³when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. (33) Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another. (34) If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come.

¹ Gr. *discriminate*.

² Gr. *discriminated*.

³ Or, *when we are judged of the Lord, we are chastened*.

necessary to make special mention of the blood, because it has been shed for us in the violent death of the body that had been given for us; and the two parts of the rite result in the same thing. The Apostle considers a 30 large number of more or less severe cases of sickness and a number of deaths, which had at this time occurred in the congregation, as such a punishing judgment of God on account of the profanation of the Holy Supper. This is indeed only to cause them to judge 31 themselves, in order to escape from such judgments of 32 God in the future. These judgments, even when they take place according to the purpose of Christ, against whom they have sinned, have only the educational purpose of bringing us to real repentance, so that we may not be destroyed with the unrepentant world. In conclusion the Apostle returns to the thought that at the common meals they are to wait until all are present. If the meal begins only when all are there, then 33 there will be a just distribution and the excesses of individuals are made impossible. If any one thinks 34 that he cannot on account of his hunger wait any longer, he is first to satisfy his hunger at home. The purpose of the congregational meal is not to satisfy hunger, but it is a religious celebration, the most important purpose of which is, that it becomes a blessing and not a curse to us. It seems that Paul had been

XII Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. (2) Ye know that when ye were Gentiles *ye were* led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led. (3) Wherefore I make known unto you, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.

asked other questions in connection with the sacred meals, but he intends to settle these matters personally when he comes to Corinth.

But on one matter, which had caused much disturbance in the congregational meetings, the Apostle will no longer leave the Corinthians in ignorance. This is their dispute concerning the different gifts of grace. The way in which he introduces his discussion, shows that the bearers of certain gifts were called the Spiritually Endowed, or the Inspired. The reason for this the Apostle sees in the fact that they do not have a proper conception of the nature of the Spirit. And how could they? The Corinthians had most of them been heathens. It is true that they already had experienced a certain spiritual power. But if they were once led to dumb idols, which they certainly would not have consented voluntarily to do, as it is perfectly senseless to go to those who cannot answer and cannot express their will, they practically had been deceived against their will and conscience by a blind power, such as the devilish spirit is. For this reason he must make clear to them what the nature of the spiritual power is through which God reveals Himself and His will. The divine and holy Spirit can be recognized by this, that none of His utterances can contain anything against Christ, and that without Him nobody can call Christ his Lord. For this reason we dare not treat with suspicion any one who is inspired by this Spirit, even if his utterances contain many things that are surprising, nor call

I CORINTHIANS

[XII, 4-9]

(4) Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. (5) And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. (6) And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. (7) But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. (8) For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: (9) to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another

only the bearers of certain spiritual gifts the Inspired since without such inspiration nobody can be a living Christian. There are indeed differences among the 4 gifts; but it is the same Spirit who produces them all, 6 just as there are differences in the ends which these gifts are intended to serve. But yet there is only one Lord, who is served through them; and it is the same God who produces them all in all. As the origin of the gifts is the same, so also is their purpose; for in whatever way the Spirit may manifest Himself in each one, they 7 all serve the good of the congregation. In this way to the one is given the speech of wisdom, which, according to 8 ii. 6, 7, reveals the depths of the divine counsels of revelation. But as these can be made known only through the revelation of the Spirit (cf. ii. 10 sqq.) it must be given through the medium of the Spirit. Another is given the speech of knowledge, which in accordance with the laws of thought can expound the connection and the foundations of the truths of faith; but this only in accordance with the same Spirit, without whom it would not be possible to receive such knowledge. To another kind of bearers of the gifts, on the basis of the same Spirit, is given the miracle-working confidence in God which finds expression in gifts of healing 9 various kinds of diseases, which gifts can depend solely upon the one Spirit, or in other evidences of power, such as the casting out of devils. Finally, the Apostle

XII, 10-18] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

gifts of healings, in the one Spirit: (10) and to another workings of ¹miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits: to another *divers* kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues: (11) but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.

(12) For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. (13) For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and

¹ Gr, *powers*.

10 mentions those gifts concerning the advantages of which they disputed most in Corinth, namely, the gift of prophecy, in conjunction with which there must also have been the gift of discerning the spirits, because an evil spirit could also inspire men. Of an altogether different character are the various gifts of miraculous languages with which we shall become acquainted later on. In addition to these there was the gift of interpreting languages; since these languages in themselves were unintelligible. But all of these gifts are bestowed by one and the same Spirit, through whom, according to v. 6, God Himself works, so that if He gives to each one as He will, then thereby only the divine will, which determines this distribution, is being realized. In the case of Christ, whom all of these gifts are to serve (cf. v. 5.), it is the same as it is with the human body. This, although it is one, has many members, and these many members constitute only one body. Accordingly the congregation, on account of its mission of serving Christ, can only constitute a unity. This organic unity of the congregation is also brought about by the fact that in baptism, in which as it were the believers are immersed into the element of the Spirit, all the individual members are united with their common center and with each other, so that all natural

were all made to drink of one Spirit. (14) For the body is not one member, but many. (15) If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body ; it is not therefore not of the body. (16) And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body ; it is not therefore not of the body. (17) If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? (18) But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. (19) And if they were all one member, where were the body? (20) But now

peculiarities and social distinctions cease. But as we all henceforth are in Him, thus too He is in us all, since we in baptism together with Him have been given to drink of a new water of life. But an organic unity, 14 such as that which the congregation represents, does not consist of one but of many members.

In connection with this image of the body and its many members, the Apostle shows that no one should think little of his own gift or that of another. If the 15 foot or the ear should regard themselves as superfluous 17 in the body, because the former is not a hand and the latter is not an eye, they would not thereby cease to belong to the body and to have their own special mission for the body. The body can no more get along without hearing than it can without seeing, and needs the sense of smell as much as it does that of hearing. God has once for all assigned to every member of the 18 body its own position, and thereby its own office, in accordance with His will, to which we are to submit. Without a plurality of members there could be no unity in the body ; and for this reason each member cannot have the same gift or purpose. But in this case 19 there must be higher and lower gifts. Those who are 20 less gifted are no more to look with jealousy upon those who have higher talents than the latter are to

XII, 21-24] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

they are many members, but one body. (21) And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee : or again the hand to the feet, I have no need of you. (22) Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary : (23) and those *parts* of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we ¹ bestow more abundant honor ; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness (24); whereas our comely *parts* have no need : but

¹ Or, *put on*.

despise the former. It certainly would be foolish if the eye should declare that it has no need of the hand, or that the head should insist that it has no need of
21 the feet. Even if some of the members are more lightly esteemed because their purposes are not as high
22 as those of others, nevertheless they are not only needed by the body, but are just as indispensable as the
23 more influential. To those very members which we think have less honor than the others, we ascribe a larger honor by clothing them and supplying through clothing what is lacking to them; and the members which we are ashamed to show, we conceal all the more carefully, while those which in themselves de-
24 serve to be seen do not need this. The Apostle wishes to intimate that by the honor which is shown them for the performance of their duties, we are to supply to those who are more poorly talented what they still lack, and what those more brilliantly talented already possess. God has Himself formed the body of different kinds of members. But through the sense of beauty and of shame that He has implanted in us, He has provided that to those members that lack honor, more honor is shown, and in this way the difference is equalized. He has done this in order that the members of the body may not in their contentions concerning their superiority become separated from each other, but all seek the prosperity of all in the same way.

I CORINTHIANS

[XII, 25-28]

God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that *part* which lacked ; (25) that there should be no schism in the body ; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. (26) And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it ; or *one* member is ¹ honored, all the members rejoice with it. (27) Now ye are the body of Christ, and ² severally members thereof. (28) And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then ³ miracles, then gifts of heal-

¹ Or, *glorified*.

² Or, *members each in his part*.

³ Gr. *powers*.

This the recognition of their equal value presup- 25
poses. This is shown by the fact that if one member
suffers, all take part in this suffering, and that the 26
honor of the one is an honor to the whole body, so that
all the members can rejoice at this. In this sense the 27
members of the Corinthian congregation are a body
that belongs to Christ ; and because each constitutes a
part of this body, each one is also a member of Christ.
And the same is true of the church in general. In it 28
God has appointed certain ones to be the regular bear-
ers of gifts, who may be described in the following
order of rank : Apostles, who had the gift of founding
congregations ; prophets, who in the speech of wisdom
declared the revelation of God (cf. v. 8), or in other
ways continued to advance the congregation, i. e.
spiritually aided to its development ; teachers, who
especially introduced the congregations to the deeper
knowledge of redemption (cf. v. 8). For the other
gifts there is no such order of rank, because they do
not seem to be expressly connected with certain per-
sons, but were bestowed in accordance with the needs
of the congregation. After the working of miracles
and the healings, Paul here mentions also the gifts of
helping in the case of the poor and the sick, and in the
management of the different branches in the guidance
of the congregation. Finally, he mentions the differ-

XIII, 1-2] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

ings, helps, ¹ governments, *divers* kinds of tongues. (29) Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all *workers* of ² miracles? (30) have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? (31) But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you.

XIII If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. (2) And if I have the *gift* of prophecy, and know all

¹ Or, *wise counsels*.

² Gr. *powers*.

ent kinds of miraculous languages which were over-
29 estimated so much in Corinth. It certainly lies in the
30 nature of things that all could not be apostles,
prophets, or teachers, and that all could not have the
same gifts, among which Paul here mentions the gift
31 of interpretation. Certainly they are, by prayers and by
making preparation for receiving such gifts, to strive
diligently for higher endowments, the matter of im-
portance being what gifts they regard as the higher.
This they ought to know of themselves, but he is will-
ing to teach them even this, and to show them a
way, and to do so not in a dry, didactic manner, but in
the following hymn glorifying love.

In Corinth, the highest estimate was put on those
miracle languages which did not find their expression
through the activity of the human mind, but were
spoken in the state of the highest excitement, in that
of ecstasy, when man feels himself entirely separated
1 from the world. For this reason Paul considers the
hymns of praise sung by the angels in heaven, so to
say, as the highest type of these languages. But even
if a person had spoken all kinds up to the highest
of these languages, but had not love, then this brilliant
endowment would be as worthless as any unmusical
2 noise. Then Paul mentions the gift of prophecy, which
in Corinth was the rival of the gift of tongues for

mysteries and all knowledge ; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (3) And if I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I give my body ¹to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. (4) Love suffereth long, *and* is kind ; love envieth not ; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, (5) doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not

¹ Many ancient authorities read *that I may glory*.

primacy, and the most important purpose of which could only be to expound, on the basis of the divine revelation, the mysteries of the divine plan of redemption. He connects with this the knowledge which leads us into the depths of the truth of redemption, in case it is perfect, and also the confidence in God that works miracles, which Jesus, in Matt. xvii. 20, had declared could move mountains. But even if a person possessed these gifts in the greatest measure, but had not love, he would be worth absolutely nothing. And even if a person would make the greatest sacrifices of love, these are worthless if they do not proceed from genuine love. It is possible that a man break up, as it **3** were, all his possessions into little pieces, in order to give them as food to the needy. He can even suffer the extreme torments of the rack, without being forced to make confessions the harm of his neighbor. It is possible to bring great sacrifices from other than pure motives. But if we do not have love, then these will not bring us the benefit which the Christian is seeking, and cannot gain the good pleasure of God. True love does not stand in need of such extraordinary sacrifices in order to manifest itself. Love manifests itself at all **4** times and at all places when it bears with patience and endurance the injustice that the neighbor inflicts upon us, and on its part gives in mercy. Love is free from all passionate zeal, from all pride which boasts or is puffed up. Love is tactful and does not in the least **5**

XIII, 6-10] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

account of evil; (6) rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; (7) ¹ beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (8) Love never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall be done away; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall be done away. (9) For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; (10) but when that which

¹ Or, *covereth*. Comp. 1 Pet. 4. 8.

deny the respect to which a neighbor is entitled; it never seeks its own. Love does not become embittered on account of a wrong that may be considered as having been done us; but even the actual wrong
6 done to it, it does not take into account. It is true that love does not rejoice over the wrong that the neighbor does, but it rejoices over all that is really good in him, i. e. sympathizes with him in all that is good in him.
7 Love bears all the troubles and burdens which the service of love demands: it thinks good of a neighbor, and hopes for good in the future if this does not appear in the present. If a neighbor disappoints love by harmful conduct, it bears this with patient endurance.

In this way the Apostle returns to the beginning of verse 4, and with this to the comparison of love with the gifts of grace with which he began. It never ceases
8 as these do. The single prophecies lose their significance when they have been fulfilled, as do the individual cases of knowledge when a higher knowledge appears. The miracle languages cease of themselves when all speaking with human tongues comes to an
9 end. But this statement the Apostle bases on the fact
10 that the results of all knowledge and of all prophecy reveal in each case only a portion of the truth. But this piecework of itself loses its importance when that which is perfect has come, since the final goal in the counsels of redemption is revealed in the consumma-

is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. (11) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child : now that I have become a man I have put away childish things. (12) For now we see in a mirror, ¹ darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. (13) But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three ; and the ² greatest of these is love.

¹ Gr. *in a riddle*.

² Gr. *greater*. Comp. Mt. 18. 1, 4 ; 23. 11.

tion of redemption, and in the truth that is then learned the truth that is partial will be absorbed. The Apostle illustrates this by the development of the 11 mental life of man, in which the speaking and thinking and judging of the child of itself lose significance when the full development of manhood has been reached. All our present knowledge is still only a look- 12 ing by means of a mirror, which—and we are to think of the metal mirror of the old world—reflects the picture in a dimmed form. The picture of the truth that has been seen through such an imperfect medium remains for us a riddle, which can only be gradually made more and more clear. Only when the consummation has come shall we see face to face, as we read in Gen. xxxii. 31. In contrast to our present partial knowledge, our knowledge then will be perfect, and can be compared only with the divine knowledge, of which we certainly know this one thing, that we are known by God through and through. But if even the 13 highest of gifts, prophecy and knowledge, have only results which are to be supplanted by more perfect things, then there are only three things that will abide forever as they are, and these are the unchangeable foundations of Christian life, namely, Faith, Hope, and Love. These are either present or are not present: and in their case there can be nothing partial, if they are as they should be. But the greatest of these

XIV Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy. (2) For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man ¹ understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (3) But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men

¹ Gr. *heareth*.

three is Love, which has its value not only for the individual life, but for the whole life of the Christian communion.

- 1 From the standpoint of love the Apostle judges of the distinction between the so-called speaking with tongues and prophecy, concerning the merits of which the Corinthians disputed. First of all we must strive after love, which is more valuable than all the gifts of grace. But by this the striving for the latter is not hindered, but rather it is to receive its norm in the former. The Corinthians regarded prophecy and the miracle tongues as spiritual gifts in the narrow sense, in which inspiration exhibits itself in a special way, although all spiritual gifts come from the Spirit. The conclusion that Paul is aiming at he states at the outset. More than for anything that this or that person considers a spiritual gift, they are to strive for the gift of prophecy. All the statements of the Apostle that
- 2 follow are intended to prove this result. Here then we learn first, that the so-called speaking with tongues consisted of praying, but praying of such a nature that it passed by the ears of those who were present as something that they did not hear, because what was spoken in the Spirit remained a mystery for the hearers. He who had been in spirit separated from the world, was in communion only with God, and spoke in unintelli-
- 8 gible words, possibly only in inarticulate sounds. But he who delivered an address filled with the Spirit spoke to men. But the contents of such prophetic discourses was by no means only prophecy in the narrow sense,

I CORINTHIANS

[XIV, 4-6]

edification, and ¹exhortation, and consolation. (4) He that speaketh in a tongue ²edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth ²edifieth the church. (5) Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. (6) But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues)

¹ Or, *comfort*.

² Gr. *buildeth up*.

but everything that served for the edification of the congregation, whether this be exhortation or comfort. The man who spoke with tongues edified only himself 4 by his prayer; but the prophet edified the whole congregation. With this it has already been said, that love which seeks not its own advantage but that of a neighbor, must think more highly of prophecy. But the value of speaking in tongues is not thereby to be minimized. Paul desires that all should speak in 5 miracle tongues. This naturally could not be the case, as he has already shown that difference in abilities belongs to the essence of a congregation. Hence he wishes for something more, namely, that they may deliver discourses full of the Spirit; because this is more important, as it is a help to the congregation. He ex- 6 pressly presupposes the case, which must have actually occurred, when he who spoke with tongues had also the gift of interpreting tongues, and hence for the edification of the congregation was able to interpret his prayer, that in itself was unintelligible. But as this was only an exceptional case, it remains a fact, that, when the Apostle, who has not received both gifts, comes to them and would speak to them in miracle tongues, he could do them no good. If he wanted to help them he would be compelled on the basis of a revelation to give them a speech of wisdom, or on the basis of a divinely given knowledge, a discourse in doctrine (cf. xii. 8). Paul illustrates this by an example. There

XIV, 7-11] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching? (7) Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? (8) For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war? (9) So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air. (10) There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and ¹ no *kind* is without signification. (11) If then I know not the meaning of

¹ Or, *nothing is without voice.*

are instruments which, although without a soul, yet, as it were, speak a language, such as the flute and the
7 zither. And yet they can produce an intelligible music only when they give the separate notes a distinction recognized by certain intervals between them; otherwise the melody that is played on these instru-
8 ments is absolutely unintelligible. If the trumpet should not emit a recognizable sound, distinguished from other sounds, it is not possible to use it for giving a signal that can be understood, in case men are to be called to battle. In the last instance, it is not only a matter of music, but also of a practical purpose, which can just as little be attained, as speaking with tongues can serve such a purpose. Indeed, we can use the human voice itself as an example, the instrument of which is the tongue. But if the voice does not pro-
9 duce words which intelligibly designate things, it is of no more service than speaking in the air. The hearer cannot understand what is said. This case actually often takes place when a foreign language is spoken.
10 The Apostle does not know how many languages there are in the wide world. In itself not one is unintelligible; for it lies in the nature of languages, that it has, as it were, a voice that makes it possible to understand it.
11 But if a person does not know the meaning which

the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh will be a barbarian ¹ unto me. (12) So also ye, since ye are zealous of ²spiritual gifts, seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the church. (13) Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret. (14) For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. (15) What is it then? I will pray with the

¹ Or, *in my case*.

² Gr. *spirits*.

every word has in a language, and hence does not understand its voice, then he is for the speaker a barbarian, because he does not understand his language; and in his judgment the speaker is a barbarian, because he speaks a different language from that of the hearer. But these miracle languages are understood by nobody, and hence they do not serve the purpose of speech and are accordingly of no benefit to the hearers.

The Apostle now proceeds practically to apply this 12 discourse. There is a slight rebuke in his statement, that they are, as is well known, very zealously concerned about the spirits, such as the spirits speaking with tongues and of prophecy. They are only anxious that these show themselves through them and that they can make a parade of these gifts, without thinking of the edification of the congregation, although they should only strive to become rich in such power of edification. For this reason he who speaks in tongues is to pray to 13 God, that He may give him at the same time the gift of interpretation, because only in this way his miracle language would edify the congregation. For if he only 14 prays in the congregation, then indeed his higher spiritual life is in activity, but his natural reasons, through which alone he could make himself understood and could influence others, does not at all participate and hence produces no results. For this reason the 15 Apostle sets up the principle, that if he even speaks in ecstatic enthusiasm, he shall always have this followed

XIV, 16-19] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also : I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. (16) Else if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of ¹ the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest ? (17) For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not ² edified. (18) I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all : (19) howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

¹ Or, *him that is without gifts* : and so in ver. 23, 24.

² Gr. *builded up*.

by a prayer that is intelligible to reason. The same is true of another kind of miracle language, which was probably more like singing, and the analogy of which in intelligible form is to be found in psalm singing. Still another kind of miracle language was probably
16 ecstatic glorification. But it was the custom of the congregation to seal every prayer of thanksgiving with its Amen. But if the former was spoken in ecstatic enthusiasm, then the entire congregation was put into the position of the layman who is to say Amen and yet could not do this because he had not understood what
17 the speaker had said in his glorification. The thanksgiving prayer that was spoken may have been very beautiful ; but the congregation, which throughout had listened without understanding, had not been edified thereby. Paul knows well how to estimate at its proper
18 value the gift of speaking with tongues, and he thanks God that he speaks the miracle languages more than
19 they all do. But in a congregational meeting he would rather speak five words in intelligible form, by which he can also instruct others, than ten thousand in a miracle tongue, which does not consist of intelligible words. He appeals to the brethren of the Christian communion, as it consists of matured men. They should not by their overvaluation of the speaking of

(20) Brethren, be not children in mind : yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be ¹men. (21) In the law it is written, ² By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people ; and not even thus will they hear me, saith the Lord. (22) Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving : but prophesying is *for a sign*, not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe. (23) If therefore the whole church be assembled together and

¹ Gr. of full age. Comp. ch. 1. 6.

² Is. xxviii. 11 f.

tongues become children in their ability to judge, as only the latter prefer that which glitters to that which is useful. In reference to wickedness they are to remain children, by understanding and knowing nothing of this, but in the ability of judging they are to be matured men. 20

The Apostle closes with a reference to the Scriptures. Although it is a prophetic passage which he has in mind, he nevertheless calls it the law, because the Scriptures in all of their parts are to be our rule of life. He finds in Is. xxviii. 11-17 a reference to strange tongues, in which in the time of redemption God will speak to His people, and that even then they will not heed Him. Then all these tongues will become a sign, but naturally not for the believers, who do not need one, but for the unbelievers, who by this miraculous gift are to learn to know, that God is doing His work in the congregation of the Christian. In reference to prophecy, on the other hand, it was self-evident, that it was intended only for the believers, as its activity depended on faith in the inspiration of the speaker. Thereupon the Apostle proves, that by the over-estimation of the gift of tongues the real purpose of this gift is frustrated. He supposes the case, that it would be possible to awaken this gift in all, and now all could speak in miracle languages in the meeting of the congregation. If then those enter who did not know any- 21 22 23

XIV, 24-26] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad? (24) But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is ¹reproved by all, he is judged by all; (25) the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.

(26) What is it then, brethren? When ye come together,

¹ Or, *convicted*.

thing of Christianity, and hence also nothing of this miraculous gift, or who had in unbelief rejected Christianity, the congregation would necessarily appear to
24 them as an assembly of crazed people. On the other hand, if all had the gift of speaking discourses filled with the Spirit, and an unbeliever or one who as yet knows nothing of Christianity should enter, what would be the consequence? One after the other would in the same way convict him of his sins, and in the
25 same way condemn him. He would find in all the prophetic words, by which he would feel himself touched, again and again the innermost secrets of his heart uncovered, and accordingly in the end would in repentance fall down before God, who by such discourses proves that He is present in the congregation. Whereas then the miracle languages, employed to an excessive degree, only thwart their own purpose, prophecy, even if it were present in excessive measure, can go even beyond its immediate purpose, and effect the conversion of the unbeliever. This is the most powerful argument to show how much higher prophecy stands than the speaking of tongues if these gifts are judged, as they should be, from the standpoint of love, according to their importance for others.

26 That which has been said now leads to special directions concerning the use in the service of the congregation of the two gifts of grace that have been discussed.

each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. (27) If any man speaketh in a tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most three, and *that* in turn; and let one interpret: (28) but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence

When they come together in the service each one will have something which he can contribute to the edification of the congregation. The Apostle mentions a psalm first, because they were probably accustomed, if a prophet were present to utter it, to begin divine worship with such a hymn. Then comes a discourse of instruction, such as could be given by one who had the gift of knowledge; and an address of wisdom from one who had received a special revelation (cf. ii. 9-10). Then probably one who had the gift of tongues spoke, and was followed by one who interpreted what he had said. There is but a single rule for the use of these gifts, namely, that all are to serve for the edification of the congregation. The Apostle would by no means forbid the miracle languages, but as they do not by themselves contribute to this end, he directs that at most three speaking in tongues shall arise, and these one after the other, because if they spoke together, as had probably happened in Corinth in the anxiety to exhibit this gift, they would only disturb the service. But at all events one shall then arise who interprets these addresses, as only in this way could they become useful to the congregation. 27

If it should happen that there is nobody present who has this gift, then those speaking in tongues are to remain silent, because these miracle tongues in themselves do not serve the purpose of edification. Such an one must control his desire, until he is alone with his God, and then can pray in his enthusiasm to his private edification. In order that those who spoke in tongues 28

XIV, 29-31] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

in the church ; and let him speak to himself, and to God. (29) And let the prophets speak *by* two or three, and let the others¹ discern. (30) But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence. (31) For ye all can prophesy one

¹ Gr. *discriminate*.

- 29 might not think that they were treated with partiality, it is directed that of the prophets, however highly the Apostle judged of their value in the service, only two or three are to speak. He does not, however, mention this as absolutely the highest number, but directs that in exceptional cases more may be allowed to speak. The other prophets, who on such an occasion have no opportunity of speaking, are to be content with examining what has been spoken. But if the discerning of spirits is a special gift (cf. xii. 10), it nevertheless was to be found in the nature of the case, that every prophet could, by his own inspiration, judge that of another, and see if his was really a divinely-wrought enthusiasm.
- 80 But if it happened that, during the speaking by a prophet, one that was sitting in the meeting was driven by the Spirit, and gave notice of his intention to speak, the former was then to cease. The Apostle regarded the new evidence of the presence of the Spirit as more valuable than a continuation of an address, in which the
- 81 first enthusiasm would naturally become weaker. He reminds them of the fact that the gift of speaking discourses filled with the Spirit is not confined to certain individuals, who are therefore permanently inspired. It can happen in the case of any one that he is suddenly seized by the Spirit ; and this can even be the express purpose of God, in order that all, including those who otherwise are accustomed to prophecy, may, on occasion, be admonished and warned. And if the prophet should object and announce that he could not control the pressure of the Spirit and discontinue his

by one, that all may learn, and all may be ¹exhorted; (32) and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; (33) for God is not a *God* of confusion, but of peace.

As in all the churches of the saints, (34) let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also ²saith the law. (35) And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church. (36) What? was it from you that the word of God went forth, or came it unto you alone?

¹ Or, *comforted*.

² Gen. iii. 16?

discourse and keep silent when another desires to speak, the Apostle reminds him that the spirit of 32 prophecy, according to the nature of the case, is subject to the prophet. Since God, who gives His Spirit, 33 is not a God of disorder, but a God of harmony, He who has caused another to be seized by the Spirit, gives to the prophet also the power to check the pressure of the Spirit, so that by the speaking together of two men prophesying, order be not disturbed, and that peace be maintained in the congregation.

Finally, the Apostle enters upon the discussion of a matter in which those in Corinth, as we had heard already in xi. 5, had emancipated themselves from the common Christian custom, although the Christians as such must know what is proper for those who are consecrated to the Lord. This custom commanded women 34 to keep silent in the congregational meetings. It did not permit them to arise and speak in the assemblies, because the speaker rules the congregation, and this is contrary to the subordination of the woman which is demanded by Gen. iii. 16. Nor are they to speak under 35 the pretext that they want to be instructed on one point or other. If they need instruction, they can ask their husbands at home, who in turn can be advised in the congregational meetings; for to speak in these herself is not even proper for a woman. If the Corinthians 36

(87) If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord. (88)

¹ But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

(89) Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. (40) But let all things be done decently and in order.

XV Now I make known unto you, brethren, the ²gospel which I³ preached unto you, which also ye received, where-

¹ Many ancient authorities read *But if any man knoweth not, he is not known.* Comp. ch. 8. 8.

² See marginal note on ch. 4. 15.

³ See marginal note on ch. 1. 17.

are not willing to submit to this custom, they are to remember that the proclamation of the gospel did not proceed from them, in which case they, as the mother congregation, could perhaps claim the right to determine what Christian custom is. The word of God did not come to them alone, so that they would not be
 87 obligated to have regard for other congregations. If it actually is the case that among them there are so many who think they have the gift of prophecy and other high spiritual gifts, then each one of these must be able to recognize the fact that what the Apostle writes is not an arbitrary command, but has been given by
 88 virtue of his Apostolic authority. If anybody does not know this, well and good; he then does not know it; Paul will not enter upon a discussion of this matter. He only repeats once more the main thing, which was
 89 the central thought of this section. They are to strive
 40 first for the prophetic gift, but are not to hinder the speaking in tongues, but are to see to this, that churchly decorum is preserved and everything is done in order as he has prescribed.

1 The fifth part of this letter discusses the question of the resurrection of the dead. The Apostle starts from that fact which constitutes the basis of his whole proclamation of the gospel, namely, the resurrection of Christ. It is something that must shame them, when

I CORINTHIANS

[XV, 2-3]

in also ye stand, (2) by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast ¹the word which I ²preached unto you, except ye believed ³in vain. (3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the

¹ Gr. *with what word*.

² See marginal note on ch. 1. 17.

³ Or, *without cause*.

he says that he is declaring this gospel to them, although he at once adds that he has already declared it to them, and that they had, as a matter of fact, received it from him, as they, too, still stand upon its basis. For evidently it would not be necessary for him to declare it again to them, if they had really in truth embraced it in its whole compass as a living truth. But as they seem to have forgotten entirely in what close connection with the most fundamental facts of the gospel the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead stands, which they had begun to doubt in Corinth, it is necessary for him to make this known to them again. For the gospel is of decisive importance, as ² through it the confidence in redemption is worked, which is the warrant of future deliverance. But if their standing in the gospel is at the same time to be their deliverance through it, they then must cling to it, and this not only in general, but in particular, in which words he has proclaimed it, i. e., in its entire compass. Only in this case, but in this case as a certainty, they will through the gospel attain salvation, unless it be that they have received their faith in vain, and that the faith which is worked through the gospel does not really bring about deliverance, which surely cannot be the truth. For among the first things that ³ he had taught them exactly as it had been delivered to him, was the fact that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. In this way it has been solemnly guaranteed us, that we through His death have been made free of sin, and that accordingly whoever believes

scriptures; (4) and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; (5) and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; (6) then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; (7) then he appeared to ¹James; then to all the apostles; (8) and last of all, as to the *child* untimely born,

¹ Or, *Jacob*.

in Him can no longer be lost on account of his sins.
 4 But just as surely as His death was made a certainty by the fact that He was buried, so certainly is the redemption signified by His death guaranteed by the fact that He was awakened from the dead on the third day, by which act God has testified, that He has not died the death of the sinner, but has died for the sinner. But this second fundamental teaching has not only been predicted beforehand by the Scriptures, but it has been absolutely proven by the fact that the
 5 Risen Lord on that third day yet appeared first to Cephas, and then to those twelve who had expressly been called by Him to be His witnesses (cf. Luke xxiv. 34, 36 sqq.), and which fact was delivered to him and through him, together with the fact mentioned as a proof of His resurrection. If they demand further confirmation of this tradition, they need only apply to one
 6 of those five hundred brethren to whom the Lord appeared at that time, and when they were together. For the majority of these are yet living, although some of them have fallen asleep. Or they can ask the head of the congregation in Jerusalem, James, who during
 7 the lifetime of Jesus was still an unbeliever, but now, as the Lord had arisen, stands at the head of all who believe in Him; or ask the Apostles all, whose united evidence is based on a later appearance (cf. Acts i. 8 4 sqq.). But He has appeared to Paul also, even to him as the latest of all the members of the company of

I CORINTHIANS

[XV, 9-11]

he appeared to me also. (9) For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (10) But by the grace of God I am what I am : and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found ¹ vain ; but I labored more abundantly than they all : yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (11) Whether then *it be* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

¹ Or, *void*.

the disciples, among whom he in importance occupies a position as low as the undeveloped prematurely born do to normally-born children. He is, indeed, in this respect, the least of the Apostles, so that he is not 9 even deserving of being called an Apostle, because he has committed the terrible crime of persecuting the congregation of God. But for this very reason his testimony is not only worth as much as that of the others, but it is the most important because, not only 10 his word, but his whole character testifies to the grace of God which has been given to him through the appearance of Christ. Through this grace he is then what he is ; and this grace which has been bestowed upon him has proved to be a momentous factor, and not something that can give or effect nothing ; for he has accomplished more through his labors than all the other Apostles together. He, the least of them all, could not possibly have done this, but through the grace of God in active communion with him could, and for this reason in reality this Spirit alone could, since his activity by the side of that of the Spirit really is undeserving of mention. It is accordingly the same whether he or 11 the original Apostles have proclaimed the resurrection of Christ, who has died for our sins. In this way they have proclaimed it, and as a consequence the Corinthians have attained to faith. Not perchance, because, these redemptive facts were doubted among them, as he declared them anew in such a solemn way, and as so

(12) Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? (13) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: (14) and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching ¹vain, ¹your faith

¹ Some ancient authorities read *our*.

certain, but for the sake of the consequences which he intends to draw from them in what follows.

- 12 What the Apostle really intends in the first place to prove from the fact of the resurrection of Christ is the possibility of the resurrection of the dead in general, We learn that there were those in Corinth who denied this possibility. To the Greek mind, which was bound in its consciousness to this world, nothing was harder to grasp than the idea of the return of the dead to life. The believers from among the Greeks were doubtless often enough compelled to listen to the derision of the people of their nation on account of their senseless faith, until the matter became doubtful to them also. In the end they began to believe that they could get along without the faith in the doctrine of a resurrection of the dead, and still be good Christians. Paul simply sets up against this the proposition, that if there is no
- 13 resurrection from the dead in general, then Christ, too, could not have risen, which he had just proved as an undeniable fact. For without doubt Christ had been dead, as is seen from the fact that He was buried. But in order that they might not think, that in case of necessity they could give up their belief in this fact too, Paul draws their attention to the consequences that would follow. The resurrection of Christ is not a single fragment of the Apostolic proclamation standing by itself, or one that could be dispensed with, but it is so much the center of this proclamation, and is so intimately connected with all parts of the gospel, that by the denial
- 14 of this fact the latter would be robbed of its entire

I CORINTHIANS

[XV, 15-18]

also is ¹vain. (15) Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up ²Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. (16) For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: (17) and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. (18) Then they also that are

¹ Or, void.

² Gr. the Christ.

essential contents. The same is naturally true of faith, since faith is the conviction of the truth of the redemptive facts that are preached. If Christ has not risen from the dead, then He has also not been exalted to be our heavenly Lord and Mediator of redemption, and this must not be preached or proclaimed. If the 15 Apostles, however, do proclaim the resurrection of Christ, then they are false witnesses, namely, in what they proclaim of God. Indeed, they are even witnesses *against* God, since they declare something concerning Him which He (according to those who doubt) has neither done nor could have done, if the resurrection from the dead as such does not take place. But every statement of an untruth as a fact made by one person concerning another, even if it is to the credit of the latter, is a testimony against him, because it exposes him to the suspicion that he has caused this false witness. But the Apostle, in order to draw attention to an- 16 other consequence, must again return to his proposition, that if the dead as such do not arise, then Christ, too, has not been raised. In this case our faith as a confi- 17 dence in salvation, which the preaching, if accepted in faith, works, would be in vain, because we should then have confidence where there is no ground for it. If through the resurrection of Christ the evidence has not been furnished that His death was something more than that of other men, namely, a death for our deliverance from sin, then we have not been delivered from the guilt which our sins have brought upon us. But this, 18

XV, 19-21] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) ¹ If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.

(20) But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. (21) For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

¹ Or, *If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, &c.*

too, follows, that those who believe that they stand in the living communion with Christ as their exalted Lord and Mediator, are thoroughly mistaken, since nobody can stand in a communion of life with a person who is dead. And when they then fall asleep, i. e., have died with the conviction that they will soon again be awakened, they, on account of their sins, are and remain the victims
19 of eternal destruction. In this case everything that we had hoped to attain through Christ is limited exclusively to this life, since He cannot secure for us a life beyond the grave, as He Himself does not possess this. The faith of the Christian has accordingly not made him eternally blessed, but only the most pitiable of all men. The latter seek to find their happiness in the present world already, while the Christians in this life are filled only with hopes which are not to be realized after death.

20 But it is settled, that Christ has risen from the dead. and from this not only the possibility, but also the certainty of the resurrection of the dead in general follows. But He who arose is not a person of indifferent importance, in whose case God performed a miracle, but He is the Mediator of redemption in connection with whom this miracle could have taken place, that others, too, might experience what He experienced. He is only the Beginner of a line of followers, who, like Him, can be as certain of the resurrection from the dead, as they are that they will awaken out of a sleep. He is to them what the firstfruits are to the full harvest. For
21 as one man, by the fact that he died in consequence of

I CORINTHIANS

[XV, 22-24]

(22) For as in Adam all die, so also in ¹Christ shall all be made alive. (23) But each in his own order : Christ the first-fruits ; then they that are Christ's, at his ²coming. (24)

¹ Gr. *the Christ*.

² Gr. *presence*.

his sin, became the cause that death as the punishment of sin came into the world (cf. Rom. v. 12), in this way, too, through one Man, who was first to rise from the dead, must come the resurrection of the dead. For as 22 all die, since their life is connected with Adam, because through their descent from him they have all become sinners, thus, too, those who are in the living communion with Christ will be made alive, and these are naturally only the believers, because these only have been transplanted into the living communion with Him, and by virtue of this can also partake of His heavenly life.

But it could now be said that nobody had, like Christ, 23 been awakened on the third day, but that many of those who lived in Christ had fallen asleep. But it is to be remembered that each individual is to be made alive only in conjunction with the group to which he belongs. But as the bringing in of the first-fruits is, in point of time, separated from the ingathering of the full harvest, in this way Christ, too, can only have been awakened first, and then those who belong to Him, and these are the ones who have fallen asleep in Him. As this takes place at the same time with the return of Christ, then at the same time all who belong to His group, shall be awakened. But this is based on the 24 fact that when Christ returns, the final consummation begins, in which He hands over to God, who is His Father, His royal supremacy. But He can only deliver over what He Himself possesses, and accordingly this transfer of supremacy can take place only when He has deprived of their strength all the powers that in heaven or on the earth oppose Him, because all those

XV, 25-27] WEISS'S COMMENTARY

Then *cometh* the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to ¹ God, even the Father ; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. (25) For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. (26) The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. (27) For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. ² But when he saith, ³ All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is ex-

¹ Gr. *the God and Father*.

² Or, *But when he shall have said, All things are put in subjection (evidently excepting him that did subject all things unto him), when, I say, all things, &c.* ³ Ps. viii. 6.

who are in any way capable of entering the kingdom of God are taken away from their power and supremacy. Only then He Himself has attained the supreme
25 dominion. It is expressly stated in Ps. cx. 1 that the Messiah is to rule until God has placed all His enemies under His feet. Accordingly the royal dominion of the exalted Christ must continue until no enemy will be able to tear those who are His away from Him. But
26 the last enemy is death ; for he who has come into the world as the punishment for sin can be deprived of his power only when sin itself, which rules over all the powers antagonistic to Christ, and through them the world, is overpowered. Only then can this power itself be made powerless, because his power extends exactly as far as the dominion of sin. Only then, too, can those be made alive who belong to Christ, over whom death still ruled on account of their sin, since with His return the redemptive work of Christ is completed. But this is the reason why so far not a single one has arisen, and why those who belong to Christ will be awakened only at the same time with the return of
27 Christ. But then this will surely take place, because according to Ps. viii. 7, God has subjected all things to the Messiah, and hence death, as the last enemy, must be put under His feet. But then he can no longer exercise any supremacy over those who belong to Christ, but only over those who, according to the will and

cepted who did subject all things unto him. (28) And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

(29) Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they

counsel of Christ, remained in death because they have remained in their sins. When then the moment comes in which God declares that His promises are fulfilled and all things have been subjected to Christ, then it is indeed clear, that of all of these that One is excepted who has subjected all things to Him. For this reason the Apostle has declared, that when, together with the return, the final consummation comes, Christ will give over the dominion to the Father; so that, after all things have been subjected to Him, He too, the Son, can subject Himself to Him who has subjected all things to Him. For as He began His heavenly and royal supremacy in accordance 28 with the counsel and the will of the Father, so He can only end it in subjection to the counsel and the will of the Father. Then the perfected kingdom of God begins, in which God is all in all; and hence, too, those who belong to Christ, after they have through Him been delivered from sin and death, will serve only God in the final consummation. In those, of course, who have remained in sin and in death God cannot be all in all.

In conclusion, Paul makes some practical applications 29 of his discussion. Among those who denied the resurrection were some who had had themselves baptized for the benefit of members of their families who had died, hoping that this baptism would do them good, supplying what they lacked in that they were not baptized. The Apostle refrains from all judgment on this superstitious custom, which at any rate indicated their deep

baptized for them? (30) why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour? (31) I protest by ¹that glorying in you, brethren, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. (32) If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, ²what doth it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us

¹ Or, *your glorying*.

² Or, *what doth it profit me if the dead are not raised? Let us eat, &c.*

concern for the welfare of their beloved dead. It is his purpose to show that those who deny the resurrection offend the most sacred Christian feelings, since if there is no resurrection from the dead, then it is impossible
80 to do them any good. How purposeless, too, would
81 then be the self-sacrificing activity of himself and of his co-workers, in which they expose themselves every hour to dangers of life, so that he can say that he daily is at the point of dying. He can appeal for this to his successful labors among them, of whom he boasts through Christ, because it is He who, as the heavenly Lord, has given him this strength and success. But these official labors of his are his witness, that he has
82 feared no danger of death, nor fears any now. In Ephesus, too, he recently had had a hard struggle with bitter enemies who were thirsting for his blood. If in these he, as men do who perform heroic services, had been striving for glory, or any other gain, then it is clear that he had reaped no benefits from his struggles. He, then, must have been certain of a higher goal which is found beyond the grave. But such a goal does not exist for him if the dead arise not. In this case there is nothing left than to enjoy the moment in the sense of those whose motto is mentioned with disgust already in Is. xxii. 13, from which sentiment they, too, should turn with aversion; and yet all higher striving, if it finds its goal in this world, is foolishness. In conclusion the Apostle, quotes a popular poetical citation (from the Thais of Menander) to

eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. (33) Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals. (34) Awake to soberness righteously, and sin not; for some have no knowledge of God: I speak *this* to move you to shame.

(35) But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and

say that a too intimate association with these heathen 33 neighbors will lead them to making room for such ideas as the denial of the doctrine of the resurrection; and this necessarily leads to such consequences, which they now yet reject with abhorrence. It is necessary 34 that they shall become thoroughly sober and rid themselves of the condition of uncertainty into which they had already been brought through such association, so that they are no longer able to distinguish between the true and the false, the bad and the good, as the heathen sins which have come to the surface among them show, and which they must lay aside. Paul must tell them, to their shame, that there are already such among them, whose indifferent conduct shows that they no longer know the character of God as to His holiness. Only on account of such a lack of clearness can it be understood whether they, on account of the ridicule of the people of their nation, allow themselves to doubt the faith in the resurrection. This weakness of their faith, no less than the weaknesses in their moral life, is the fruit of imperfect religious convictions, which puts them on the same level as the heathen.

The Apostle turns to the other side of this discus- 35 sion concerning the resurrection of the dead, to the question of the bodily condition of those who have risen. Here it becomes clear by what superficial show of reasoning some were accustomed to prove the impossibility of a resurrection. How are we to picture to ourselves the manner of this resurrection? With what kind of a body are we to imagine that those who

XV, 86-88] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

with what manner of body do they come? (86) Thou foolish one, that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened except it die: (87) and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; (88) but God giveth it a body even as

arise return from the grave, since the old body has decayed in the tomb? In reply to the first question, the 86 Apostle says: "Fool, that thou art." In this seemingly shrewd question there appears the foolishness of the man who regards the problem as unanswerable. In his own actions and their results, he can certainly convince himself that the return of the dead to life is not something unthinkable. For the seed corn which he sows cannot produce a new life from itself, unless first it has gone through the process of decay and death. In this daily process of nature it is seen that the awakening of life out of death is by no means an exceptional miracle, but is the rule. But this same process 87 of nature answers the second question also. The seed corn that is sowed is not at all the body of the plant which is to proceed from it, but is, as it were, a naked seed, not clothed with a body, be this a grain of wheat 88 or any other. It is only God who gives to it a body, by producing a plant from it; but this body is in the case of every seed corn just that one which God had determined to give to this seed corn, and to none other, according to the order of nature established in creation. Just in this way the body of the resurrection is not that which is decayed in the grave. The man who is slumbering in the grave is as little clothed with a body as the decayed seed corn is; but the body which God gives him in the resurrection is not, perchance, any kind of a body, which has no connection with that which is decayed in the grave, but is the very body that is destined for this person, and is a creative re-

it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. (39) All flesh is not the same flesh : but there is one *flesh* of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. (40) There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial ; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial is another. (41) There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars ; for one star differeth from another star in glory.

newal of that which he once possessed. But of course 39 it is a body of entirely different material character. But that the body can be composed of different kinds of materials, we can see in the difference between the bodies of human beings and of animals. These all consist of flesh, but the flesh of men and the various kinds of animals is entirely different. In this connection the Apostle is not thinking of the material elements. The 40 bodies of heavenly creatures (angels) have no material elements such as earthly creatures have ; but for this reason, too, their glory is altogether different from the glory of the latter. Of the glory of the former we have no conception. We only know that heaven is the place of light, for which reason they must be shining in supermundane beauty, infinitely superior even to the most perfect human beauty. But our earthly sphere, 41 too, shows to us such a difference in glory. Sun and moon and stars, all shine in a different glory, and even one star differs from the other in its glory. In this way the bodily character of those who arise will consist of a different element than the material of our earthly bodies, and will therefore shine in a higher glory than the glory of the heavenly bodies. Only by the contrast to the earthly bodies can we, to a certain degree, picture to ourselves the nature of the body in the resurrection.

At this point the Apostle returns to the example of

XV, 42-44] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(42) So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption : (43) it is sown in dishonor ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power : (44) it is sown a ¹ natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a ¹ natural body, there is also a

¹ Gr. *psychical*.

42 the seed corn. The earthly body, when it is placed in the tomb, is like the seed corn which is sown in the ground. The body, when it is raised, is like the plant that has grown out of the seed. But now so much is certain, that the transitoriness of the human body, which only appears when it decays in the grave, is no longer a characteristic of it in the resurrection ; for it is not subject to corruption. In the place of the
48 natural body, which, as the Apostle has already stated in xii. 23, is covered, because we are ashamed of it, and from which we turn our eyes all the more when, being dead, it is put into the grave, the glory of the risen body appears, which is the greatest honor and glory. While the weakness of the earthly body, as appears already in the fact that it is subject to all kinds of sicknesses, in death experiences a complete loss of power, the risen body must be characterized by the
44 most complete fulness of power. All three contrasts the Apostle summons together in that of one body that is under the direction of our natural mental life, and of one that is to be given to us by the divine Spirit. For incorruption is a characteristic of the Spirit, as is also that heavenly glory, in which the heavenly spiritual beings are accustomed to appear, as also the perfect fulness of the power with which He operates. But just as certain as there is a body that is under the direction of the natural principle of life, so surely there is one that is determined by the Spirit that dwells in it ; and thereby the question is settled, in what kind of a body those who arise will come forth

spiritual *body*. (45) So also it is written, ¹The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam *became* a life giving spirit. (46) Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is ²natural ; then that which is spiritual. (47) The first man is of the earth, earthy : the second man is of heaven. (48) As is the earthy, such are they also that are

¹ Gen. ii. 7.

² Gr, *psychical*.

from the grave. The Scriptures themselves say, in 45 Gen. ii. 7, that the first human being, Adam, became a living soul. But if he really was alive, then he must have had a body, which was under the direction of the soul that was created within it, if the latter produced for itself, as it were, an organ for all its passive and active workings. In the same way the Adam, who appears at the end of history, will in the resurrection have become a life-working Spirit, which must join with itself a body as its organ determined for Him. Of course the body of this Adam at the end of history, who, as was the case with the first Adam, gave existence to an altogether new race and generation of men, cannot from the outset have been of a spiritual nature, for this would have been contrary to the law, according to which the natural comes first, and then the spiritual. For this reason it was possible for this 46 spiritual body to have come into existence only in the resurrection of Christ. But if we ask how a man can secure this entirely new body, it is to be remembered that the first man, whom all others resembled, had come from the earth, and accordingly was made of the 47 dust of the ground (cf. Gen. ii. 7) ; whereas the second Man, who appeared in Christ, and indeed, like all the children of Adam, had a natural body, according to His real essence came from heaven, and for this reason also in the resurrection could attain to the bodily elements that are characteristic of those who dwell in the heavens. For as all those who dwell on the earth, ac- 48

XV, 49-51] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

earthy : and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. (49) And as we have borne the image of the earth, ¹ we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

(50) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (51) Behold, I tell you a mystery : ² We all

¹ Many ancient authorities read *let also bear*.

² Or, *We shall not all, &c.*

according to their bodies, are made of the dust of the earth, like as Adam was created out of the dust of the earth, so He who came from heaven, when He again returned to heaven in His resurrection, must in His body have been formed like all the inhabitants of heaven (angels), who are purely spiritual creatures and
49 have only spiritual bodies. And as we here upon earth bear the image of Adam who was formed out of the dust of the earth, so, too, we, when the resurrection comes, will bear in ourselves that spiritual body which Christ, who has been exalted to heaven, received in His resurrection.

The Apostle brings this discussion to a close by the statement, that independent of the question, whether or in what degree we can picture to ourselves the bodies of those who have risen, so much is settled, that a change in the present bodily character must take place in the resurrection. For as by the resurrection we are to enter into the kingdom of God, it is clear, that the elements of our earthly body, which consist of flesh and
50 blood, cannot enter upon the possession of this kingdom of God, as it is, for the former is characterized by corruption and the latter by incorruption. This is
51 proved by the fact, which the Apostle announces as a mystery that had been revealed to him, namely, that all who are at present alive, as many as will not yet fall asleep, as those did who are dead, of whom he has been speaking in the preceding, will also be transformed. The Apostle, who himself yet hoped to see the return

shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (54) But when ¹this corruption shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come

¹ Many ancient authorities omit *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and.*

of the Lord, because it was thought that this would yet occur in that generation, includes himself in those who will not fall asleep, and thereby will not through death at the resurrection attain to these new bodies. Not this is the question that not one of these will yet die, but, that not only those who have died must in the resurrection experience a transformation of their bodily character, but also those who remain alive. Of this transformation Paul says, that it is necessary for the entrance into the kingdom of God. But this transforma- 52
tion makes impossible any and every process of death, because in one and the same moment, as this is emphasized very strongly by the double expression, it will take place when the trumpet, which sounds at the end of the world, will give the signal for the resurrection of the dead. For then, because the kingdom of God in its very essence is incorruptible, this present corruptible body must, like a new garment, put on in- 53
corruption, whether that day will find us among the living or already decayed in the tomb. But then that new body, which those who are arisen will put on, as also those who remained alive, will be immortal, and will never again become subject to death. With solemn emphasis the Apostle again points to the day when this transformation shall take place, because then 54
that which, in Is. xxv. 8, is designated as the victory over death, shall take place, through which the latter is entirely and forever destroyed, and the triumphant cry

XV, 55-58] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

to pass the saying that is written, ¹Death is swallowed up
²in victory. (55) ³O death, where is thy victory? O death,
where is thy sting? (56) The sting of death is sin; and the
power of sin is the law: (57) but thanks be to God, who
giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58)
Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye
know that your labor is not ⁴vain in the Lord.

¹ Is. xxv. 8.

² Or, *victoriously*.

³ Hos. xiii. 14.

⁴ Or, *void*.

from Hos. xiii. 14 will be realized as a victory, in which
55 the sting of death has been taken away, with which it
so far has inflicted death (as a scorpion does with its
sting), so that in all future time death can no longer
slay. For that which gave to death its power was sin,
56 as the punishment for which death had come into the
world; and what gave the power to sin to deliver us
over to this punishment, was the law, which condemned
the sinner to death. In the kingdom of God, however,
where there is no longer either sin or law, there can
57 also be no death, and no mortality of the body. But if
we glorify God, who will surely and certainly give us the
final victory, we can do this, because our exalted Lord
Jesus Christ has in His death delivered us from sin and
in His resurrection has become the First of the new
mankind, who no longer bear the image of the earthly
58 Adam, but that of the heavenly. For this reason the
Corinthians are to be firmly established in the hope of the
resurrection, and are not to lose it through the doubts
which people arouse in them. Not, indeed, in order to
carouse in visions of the future, which have no value for
our earthly life, but these things are to urge us on to be-
come more and more zealous and faithful in the work
which the Lord has enjoined upon each one according to
his special gift in His service. For now we know, that
all the toils of labor, which we undergo to this purpose,
are not in vain, but receive their reward. For in the

I CORINTHIANS

[XVI, 1-4]

XVI Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. (2) Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. (3) And when I arrive, ¹whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: (4) and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall

¹ Or, *whomsoever ye shall approve by letters, them will I send, &c.*

Lord, who has delivered us, the surety has been given, that we are to attain to this blessed consummation in a kingdom of incorruption and immortality.

The manner in which the conclusion of the Epistle 1 begins to speak of a collection for the saints, the purposes of which were already known to them, shows that Paul, in accordance with his promises in Gal. ii. 10, had appealed for assistance in Corinth, as he had done in Galatia, for the poor congregations in Palestine, and that questions had been put to him from Corinth concerning the way in which this collection was to be raised. He now proposes that they should do this as it had been done in Galatia. On the first day of the week, which 2 at that time must already have had a special significance for the congregation, everybody is to lay aside for himself whatever during the course of the past week had been given to him by the blessing of God in excess of his needs. Then this, as it were, will be treasured up ready for the Apostle, and it will no longer be necessary for him to begin the collection, upon which he, under these circumstances, will not have exercised a moral pressure. He can then think at once of the transfer of these gifts 3 of their love to Jerusalem. They themselves are to select those who are to take it, and he will give them a letter of recommendation, so that they can deliver this collection in his name. But if the collection should 4 turn out to be so liberal, that it would be worth while for him to deliver it personally, then they would not

go with me. (5) But I will come unto you, when I shall have passed through Macedonia; for I pass through Macedonia; (6) but with you it may be that I shall abide, or even winter, that ye may set me forward on my journey whithersoever I go. (7) For I do not wish to see you now by the way; for I hope to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. (8) But

need this letter of recommendation, because he could then make the journey with them. This then presupposes that he is coming to them, as he had already 5 hinted in iv. 19; xi. 34. In this connection he draws especial attention to the fact that he will come by way of Macedonia. The emphasis which he puts on his purpose of going through Macedonia first, presupposes that this is something entirely new to his readers; and from the Second Epistle we do indeed learn that before this he had stated to the Corinthians that he would come to them directly across the sea, and from there go 6 on to Macedonia. He at once also indicates what had induced him to change the plans for his journey. He would like, if it were at all possible, to tarry with them and even possibly to remain with them over winter, and then receive from them companions for his further journey, concerning which he indeed is not certain whether it will extend beyond Jerusalem or not. If he were to come by the direct route now, he would be able only to salute them on the journey, because, under all circumstances, he desired to visit the congregations in Macedonia before he went up to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 7 xix. 21). But he wishes just at this time, since there is so much to regulate and to discuss in Corinth, not to pay them merely a passing visit. After his journey through Macedonia he hopes to be able to remain with them a longer time, which hope, indeed, as he already indicates in iv. 19, is dependent on the permission of the Lord, 8 i. e. chiefly perhaps on the success of this letter. From

I CORINTHIANS

[XVI, 9-41]

I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost ; (9) for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

(10) Now if Timothy come, see that he be with you without fear ; for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do : (11) let no man therefore despise him. But set him forward on his journey in peace, that he may come unto me : for I ex-

the fact that he wanted to stay in Ephesus till Pentecost, the Corinthians could calculate about what time they could expect him, since now as we saw in v. 7, 8, it was about the time of Easter. But he wishes to stay 9 in Ephesus, because just at that time there was offered him there the opportunity for an extensive activity, and he still had many adversaries to combat, in order to make permanent all that he had begun there. In the meanwhile the coming of Timothy, of which he had already spoken in iv. 17 as something entirely certain, had become a matter of doubt. According to the reports which he had in the meanwhile received from the representatives of the congregation and through a letter from the congregation, and according to the letter just written, the directions that had been given him are here made unnecessary. As Timothy also journeyed through Macedonia (Acts xix. 22), Paul seems to have sent word after him to return again. If these orders should not reach him and he should come to 10 Corinth, they are to see to it that he, on account of his youth, should not be frightened by the congregation, as he is coming solely by the instruction of the Apostle. But as it is not the age of a man, but his activity, that determines his worth, no one is to esteem him slightly, 11 but they are, without first having discussed with him concerning his instructions, to accompany him on his journey back, for he will await his return in company with the brethren coming from Corinth, of whom we

XVI, 12-16] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

pect him with the brethren. (12) But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren: and it was not at all ¹his will to come now; but he will come when he shall have opportunity.

(13) Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. (14) Let all that ye do be done in love.

(15) Now I beseech you, brethren (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have set themselves to minister unto the saints), (16) that ye also be in subjection unto such, and to every one that helpeth

¹ Or, *God's will that he should come now.* Comp. Rom. 8. 18 marg.

12 will soon hear more. But the brother Apollos, to whom probably a hearty invitation had been sent from Corinth, Paul has repeatedly urged to go at once with these deputies, but he had decidedly refused to do this, as it seems, at this moment, when some were trying to make him the head of a party in Corinth, he did not consider it wise to go.

13 The final admonitions proceed from a command to
14 be watchful in holding fast to the faith, and to be manly in the battle against all evil, up to an exhortation to become strong in this. He also urges them expressly to do all this in love, because it is only love that can remove all the troubles of the congregation. As the congregation certainly was still lacking the
15 settled pastoral office and that of congregational management, the Apostle warmly recommends for these purposes the family of Stephanas, which, as we know, was the first that had been converted in Greece. The members of this family had voluntarily given themselves for all the necessary services, as now, too, Stephanas, together with two men who evidently belonged to his family, had, at the request of the congregation, made the journey to Ephesus, and had brought the Apostle
16 their letter. They are then voluntarily to submit to people of this kind by following their counsel and admo-

I CORINTHIANS

[XVI, 17-22]

in the work and laboreth. (17) And I rejoice at the ² coming of Stephenas and Fortunatus and Achaicus : for that which was lacking on your part they supplied. (18) For they refreshed my spirit and yours : acknowledge ye therefore them that are such.

(19) The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. (20) All the brethren salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss.

(21) The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. (22)

¹ Gr. *presence*. 2 Cor. 10. 10.

nitions, as also to others who work and labor with them, so that everybody can secure for himself the same claims to an authoritative position in the congregation. 17 The Apostle rejoices at the presence of all three, because they fill out the lack, originates in the fact, that the people could come only through a letter and not personally to the Apostle. For in this way they 18 have refreshed not only him in his spiritual life, in which their mutual love is founded, but also themselves, who, as it were, felt themselves represented before the Apostle in these men. If they therefore recognize them as that which they are to him and to the congregation, then they will be glad to subordinate themselves to such men.

Finally Paul sends greetings from the congregations 19 of Western Asia Minor, especially warm salutations 20 from his guest-friends in Ephesus (cf. Rom. xvi. 3-4), and the congregation in their house, and finally from all the members of the congregation in Ephesus, whose communion of love is to be sealed by the holy kiss. The Apostle then adds with his own hands a greeting. 21 This begins with an earnest warning, that he who does 22 not love the Lord is accursed, and hence will be destroyed eternally; and he seals this with a word that was current either with him or among all the Chris-

XVI, 23-24] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema.

¹Marana tha. (23) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (24) My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹That is, O (or Our) Lord, come!

tians. The sense of *Maran atha* has not yet been determined with a certainty, but at all events it points to the coming of the Lord to judgment. The benediction 28 itself reads as in Rom. xvi. 20; but Paul adds in his 24 letter, in which he had been compelled to write so many sharp words, an express assurance of his love, which is intended for those, too, whom he had been compelled to rebuke. His love, by which he knew himself connected in the living communion in Christ with all in the same manner, is to accompany them on all their ways, as he also prays that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be with them in this way.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

I Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy ¹our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints that are in the whole of Achaia: (2) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) Blessed be ²the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

¹ Gr. *the brother*. ² Or, *God and the Father*. See Rom. 15. 6, marg.

In this letter too the Apostle emphasizes the fact that 1
he is writing with the authority of an Apostle of Christ, which he has received by divine will. As he includes the brother Timothy with himself in the salutation, with which the Epistle begins, we see that the latter, who, according to the First Epistle, was on his journey to Corinth, had in the meanwhile returned. Whether he really reached Corinth (cf. Cor. xvi. 10–11), becomes a matter of serious doubt from the fact that mention is nowhere made of any reports which he brought from there. The letter, however, is not addressed to the Corinthian congregation alone, but also to the scattered Christians in Greece, who probably had not yet been gathered into separate congregations, and through their frequent intercourse with the Corinthian congregation, with which they were informally connected, had probably heard of the Apostle's dealings with them, and for this reason were to consider what was written in this letter as addressed to them also. The salutation reads 2
exactly as in 1 Cor. i. 3.

This letter does not begin, as others usually do, with 8
a thanksgiving for that which God had done to the congregation, but with praise to God for a special manifestation of His grace to the Apostle. He glorifies God,

Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort ; (4) who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (5) For as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also

who is also the Father of Jesus Christ, because He has exalted Him to His royal dominion, through which Christ transmits to us all the good things of divine grace. God has shown Himself to the Apostle as the Father from whom all the manifestations of mercy come, and as the God from whom all comfort is derived. For in reality it is not an individual experience for which he desires to glorify God, because what he and his associates have been constantly experiencing, has
4 only been confirmed anew thereby. Their experiences of affliction is also not unique, but their entire life in their calling is a great affliction, in connection with which they all experience the divine comfort. But as their life in their calling is devoted entirely to their congregations, they are now being comforted, so that they can comfort any of those who are in affliction, through the comfort which they have themselves experienced from God. From this it is apparent, that the Apostle is not thinking of a comfort that he has experienced in deliverance from external oppression, but of one which relieves the oppressive anxiety of this affliction, by having been made certain of the mercy of God. Only in this case can he comfort others, by making these too certain of this divine fatherly love of God in all their afflictions.
5 For the sufferings of the Apostle and of his companions are only those which Christ endured from the unbelieving world. But for this very reason it is necessary that their comfort too prove more than abundant through Christ, who has Himself endured the same sufferings in order to make them sure of the fatherly

II CORINTHIANS

[I, 6-8

aboundeth through Christ. (6) But whether we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation ; or whether we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which worketh in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer : (7) and our hope for you is stedfast ; knowing that, as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort. (8) For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning

love of God. From this it is clear that the sufferings 6 which God sends to His servants are intended only for the comfort of their congregations, because this comfort makes these capable of enduring with the same patience as they do the sufferings that the Apostle and his associates bear. For the hope that this comfort will produce such patience in them is one that for him cannot be shaken, as he has testified to them before. But in this case, then, the fact that the Apostle too has been comforted must redound to their comfort, and thereby, too, to their eternal salvation, of which the faith that has been tried by patience makes us all the more certain. This consideration of the comfort that he has 7 constantly experienced, however, is based on the certainty that, since the readers, together with the Apostle, participate in the sufferings of Christ, they will also have part with the Apostle in the comfort that comes from Christ. For this reason they can with him glorify God, who converts into a blessing the affliction of His servants, as also this comfort in this affliction.

Only at this point the Apostle begins to speak of his special experience which had given him the occasion to glorify God, and with this also of his experiences since the time when his first letter was written to the Corinthians, with which he again wants to make connection here. He desires that they are not to remain in 8 ignorance of the whole burden of the oppression, which had occurred to him on this journey through Western

our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life: (9) ¹ yea, we ourselves have had the ² sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead: (10) who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver: on whom we have ³ set our hope that he will also still deliver us; (11) ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication;

¹ Or, *but we ourselves.*

² Gr. *answer.*

³ Some ancient authorities read *see our hope; and still will he deliver us.*

Asia Minor. The way in which he throughout connects the name of Timothy with this, leads us to believe that the latter had returned to the Apostle before Paul left Ephesus, and had made this journey with him. This oppression had surpassed the measure of their strength to such an extent that they were already fearful of
 9 their lives. But it had not been without a divine purpose that, as far as they were concerned, in deliberating as to what should be done, they reached only the conclusion that death would be their lot, because the counsels of men knew no further help. They were to become such as did not put their confidence in their own wisdom or power, but in God, who, because he can awaken even the dead, can give help also, when,
 10 humanly speaking, there is no more help to be had. As such He manifested Himself at that time, when He delivered them from such a great danger of death, which was really death itself. He, upon whom they had set all their hopes, will deliver them also in the future. The Apostle repeats this in order to connect with it a condition, the fulfilment of which he presupposes as a matter of course. For he expects that the
 11 readers, together with all of his congregations, will assist to this end by their petitions in his favor. God intends to make his deliverance dependent on this condition, so that the thanksgiving for the gift of grace for further activity on his part that has been granted to

II CORINTHIANS

[I, 12]

that, for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf.

(12) For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves in the

him and to his companion through their deliverance may proceed from the many countenances that are turned in joy of thank to God. For this gift of grace, for which they are petitioning, is to be secured through the many, upon whose countenances this joy of gratitude beams, and this gift, because all further activity of the Apostle is for the benefit of his readers, is, for their own sakes, to be repaid by such great thanksgiving.

Now it becomes clear why Paul at the beginning of his letter had entered upon his experience in Western Asia Minor. For the journey, in which he had met with these misfortunes, he would not have made at all if he, according to his former promise, had gone directly from Ephesus to Corinth. That he did not do this was the subject of criticism at the latter place. He accordingly begins his letter with a justification of his action in changing his route, which explanation he had already promised the Corinthians at the close of his former letter (1 Cor. xvi. 5). For if this change could be correctly judged as they had judged it in Corinth, then he could not think of any confidence on his part in their petitions and thanksgiving for the continuation of his work among them that had been made possible through this deliverance. For this reason he begins with a solemn declaration of his uprightness, without which they could not petition for his activity, nor rejoice in it. If he and those like him 12 can glory in this, then it is their conscience which testifies to them that they have conducted their career in the holiness of God, which is separated from all

world, and more abundantly to you-ward. (13) For we write no other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge, and I hope ye will acknowledge unto the end : (14)

uncleanness of the world, and in an uprightness which, even if examined by the most brilliant light of the sun, will show no defects. They have not acted thus because of shrewd calculation, as a natural and human wisdom also often teaches men to avoid the evil, but through the grace of God, which enabled them to do this. In this way they have been conducting their lives in the midst of an ungodly world, in which there are so many temptations for the opposite walk, but all the more in dealing with them where they had all the fewer occasions for doing this. The Apostle bases these statements on a reference in a letter, in which he had on one occasion promised to go directly from Ephesus to Corinth, and from there to Macedonia. This can only have been the letter that was lost, of which mention was made in 1 Cor. v. 9. The Corinthians had thought that, in view of this letter, the change in the journey had shown that Paul lacked that uprightness of which he had just boasted. But he and those like him do not write with a meaning other than what the words themselves and their natural sense declare. They neither put their real meaning between the lines nor do they intentionally express their thoughts in an ambiguous way ; but, as the Apostle declares in his play on words, which cannot be reproduced in modern tongues, they want to be understood exactly as their writings read. He hopes that now, and until their association with the congregation is ended, they will have evinced this uprightness and honesty, as they have done this in the past, at least in part, since he unfortunately cannot say this concerning those who are filled with suspicion toward him. But then they will

II CORINTHIANS

[I, 15-17

as also ye did acknowledge us in part, that we are your glorying, even as ye also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus.

(15) And in this confidence I was minded to come first unto you, that ye might have a second ¹ benefit; (16) and by you to pass into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come unto you, and of you to be set forward on my journey unto Judæa. (17) When I therefore was thus minded, did I show fickleness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea

¹ Or, *grace*. Some ancient authorities read *joy*.

know full well that they will be able to boast of him and his associates, who have labored together in Corinth, as their teachers, which certainly would not be possible if they did not regard them as upright, just as they in turn boast of the Corinthians as the fruit of their labors. And, indeed, he hopes that the congregation on the day of Christ will glory in them, because that time will then have come when they will know him and his companions perfectly as they are.

In this confidence, which removed all suspicion of his 15
lack of uprightness for having given his written promise,
in case that he would later be compelled to change his
plans, he had originally formed this plan and informed
them of it. If it had been his intention on that occa- 16
sion to come earlier than he now actually came, he
still had only this purpose, namely, to deliver to them,
by a double visit, a double measure of love, coming to
them on his way to Macedonia and on his return, and
then to receive from them an escort to Judea. Had he 17
really at that time been guilty of that indifference of
which they were now accusing him in Corinth, be-
cause he had promised to do what he found impossible?
Do they know him as a man who makes his plans after
the manner of natural men such as are determined by
the impulse of the moment, and in connection with
every promise, no matter with what assurance it is

yea and the nay nay? (18) But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay. (19) For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you ¹ by us, *even* ¹ by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea. (20) For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us. (21) Now he that

¹ Gr. *through*.

given, always keep in reserve a refusal in case that, later, another thing will suit them better? Paul does not want to boast of his reliability; but yet God is faithful, as we can see from this, that His word, which has been entrusted to His messenger for proclamation, is certainly not a Yea and a Nay at the same time,
 19 i. e. was not reliable. For the contents of the word of God, which he with his two companions had proclaimed in Corinth, were none other than the Son of God promised in the Old Testament, who has appeared in Jesus Christ. But Christ has not brought affirmative and negative at the same time, but only a yea has appeared in Him, as all the promises of God, by their fulfilment
 20 in Him have been fully confirmed. For this reason the certainty of faith has been wrought in the congregation through Christ, which says Yea and Amen to this by glorifying God for the fulfilment of His promises in Christ, and then also by glorifying His faithfulness. But this has only been brought about by the messengers of God, who have declared Christ to them. And now only it is apparent in how far the faithfulness of God, which has been glorified by their preaching, guarantees also their own reliability. For who else
 21 than this faithful God is it who has transplanted them into the life communion with Christ, in whom His faithfulness has been made manifest to us, and who has preserved them in this, as the readers themselves have experienced this, since He does the same to all believ-

II CORINTHIANS

[I, 22-23]

establisheth us with you ¹ in Christ, and anointed us, is God ;
(22) ² who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit
in our hearts.

(23) But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to

¹ Gr. *into*.

² Or, *seeing that he both sealed us*.

ers? But He has consecrated and prepared for His service His messengers in a special way, just as He did in the case of Christ Himself, who derives His name from this circumstance, in which it is implied that He has endowed them with the faithfulness that is characteristic of Himself. As God has made them certain 22 of their state of grace, and as He, as it were, put His seal and stamp on them, and has given them as a pledge of the future consummation of redemption the first one of the redemptive gifts that He has promised, namely, the Spirit, so surely, too, He will by grace endow them through His Spirit with the faithfulness of Christ, so that their promise is as little at the same time a refusal as their preaching concerning Christ has at the same time been a Yea and a Nay.

But the Apostle proves that in reality it was not instability which had been the motive in changing the plan of his journey, by mentioning now the real motive in doing so. For this he can only appeal to 23 God, whom he calls down as a witness upon his soul, because He knows the deepest motives of his heart, and will punish him if he should say anything untruthful concerning the matter. He has not returned to Corinth since his last visit because he wanted to spare them; hence, too, he has not come on his journey to Macedonia, as he had formerly promised, because in this case he would have been compelled to take sharp measures in dealing with the congregation on account of the many abuses existing there. With this he does not intend to say that the matters concerned in such severe punishments would have pertained to their

spare you I forbore to come unto Corinth. (24) Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy :
 II for in ¹faith ye stand fast. (1) ²But I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow. (2) For if I make you sorry, who then is he that

¹ Or, *your faith*.

² Some ancient authorities read *For*.

24 faith. For he and his companion do not exert their authority over them in matters of faith, because they desire only as a reward their joy in the progress of their converts' Christian life, which presupposes the Christian faith in which they already stand, and in reference to which he has nothing to chide them for. But if he had come with severe punishments on account of the abuses that had prevailed in the congregation, he would not have advanced their joy, but have felt compelled to check it. If he then decided for the present not to go to Corinth, as he had before contemplated doing, he has done this for his own sake, because it would have saddened him to be compelled to punish them so severely. It is his wish not to come to them again in sadness. We see from this that he had revisited in Corinth since the time when he founded the congregation, and under circumstances which had deeply saddened him. Possibly the Apostle is thinking of that visit, in 1 Cor. xxvi. 7, when he says that he would not, on this occasion, as he did on the preceding, visit them while on his journey to other places. That he makes no mention of this visit in the entire first Epistle, is to be explained by the fact that in the letter which he mentions in i. 13, he had already discussed in full those prevailing abuses which he had not been able to correct on his flying visit. For we know from 1 Cor. v. 9, that the main contents of this letter referred to the sins of fornication that prevailed in Corinth. That he does not again want to be saddened, the Apostle founds
 2 on the fact that if by his coming he would have sad-

II CORINTHIANS

[II, 3-4]

maketh me glad but he that is made sorry by me? (3) And I wrote this very thing, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy* of you all. (4) For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you

dened them through his strict punishments, there would have been none to cause him joy. For the congregation which would have been saddened by him and his severity would have been the last to produce this joy. For this very reason he determined, instead 8 of coming in person as he had planned, to write his first letter. Thereby he not only spared himself a sorrowful visit, but he succeeded through this letter in rooting out the abuses in the congregation, and could hope that on his visit *after* his journey through Macedonia he would no longer be saddened by those by whom, in the natural course of events, he ought to have been gladdened. But that the letter would have this effect he had reason to hope, since he, in that love which believes all things and hopes all things, has a firm confidence in them, even in those who have committed many sins and who so suspiciously criticise the change in his plans. For he knew that his joy was the joy of all, and that for this reason they would do everything by the removal of the abuses to cause him joy and take care that at his later visit he would come in joy. For, indeed, he has not only written in order to 4 spare himself sorrow, but has himself not avoided the greatest sorrow in order to attain this purpose. His first Epistle certainly was not easy for the Apostle to write. It was not the doctrinal discussions that it contains, but his sharp admonitions and his often bitter words of indignation that had this result. On the one hand, his worry and deep oppression of the heart and intense anxiety, had caused him to be deeply con-

with many tears; not that ye should be made sorry, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

(5) But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all.

cerned as to whether, by writing in such a tone he could attain his purpose. On the other hand, he was weighed down by grief that he was compelled to write such words to his children, and that his many tears had, as it were, dimmed his eyes while he wrote. But he did not want to sadden them thereby, but to make them better, and he did not know a better way of showing them his love than by writing exactly as he had done. He could not have loved them as he did if, to spare himself this anxiety and sadness, he had written otherwise; and in that case, since his letter would have failed of its purpose, he would not have become the partaker of their joy.

But how entirely that letter had attained its purpose is shown by the successful way in which the case of the man guilty of incest had been settled. That Paul happens to speak of this case, is based on the fact that he knew full well that it was his sharp condemnation of this case and his rebuke of their looseness in this matter that had caused the greatest offense in Corinth. And, as a matter of fact, what he had said of this case could sadden his readers most, and must have been written by him, too, in the greatest
5 sadness. But if sadness had been caused in this case, it certainly was not he, but that certain other person whom he will not mention, who had caused such sorrow. Most assuredly the offender has saddened them all through his crime; but he, in order not to crush him, too heavily with exaggerated charges, will only say to him that the sadness of the congregation in part is to

II CORINTHIANS

[II, 6-7

(6) Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by ¹the many; (7) so that contrariwise ye should ²rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means

¹ Gr. *the more*.

² Some ancient authorities omit *rather*.

be attributed to him, since the Apostle's other words of censure had also contributed much to this sorrow. He had categorically demanded the expulsion of the man guilty of incest. However much this unyielding strict- 6 ness on the part of the Apostle had caused offense, the majority of the congregation had nevertheless decided to obey the Apostle and to expel the guilty man. It was now a natural thought, and had probably been expressly suggested to the Apostle from different sides, to demand first of all that the minority of the congregation also should accept the resolution of the majority before the Apostle continued his dealings with the congregation. Over against this the Apostle declares that the punishment inflicted by the majority was enough for the man who had committed a crime so terrible that even now he does not wish to name it but only refers to it with the expression that he had already used in 1 Cor. v. 5. He demands now that, instead of 7 forcing the consent of the part of the congregation that had refused consent to the expulsion, the punishment should be remitted to the culprit, and that he be comforted. The expulsion had accordingly attained its full purpose, and the man guilty of incest had thereby not only been brought to the knowledge of his sins, but also had been filled with contrite sorrow for his deed. The Apostle is afraid that if the punishment is continued he will be consumed by a still greater sorrow, i. e. will be cast into absolute despair. For the very reason that he was a criminal of such a kind, the expulsion from the congregation could suggest the thought to him that he had committed the sin for which there is

such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow.

(8) Wherefore I beseech you to confirm *your* love toward him.

(9) For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, ¹ whether ye are obedient in all things. (10) But

¹ Some ancient authorities read *whereby*.

8 no forgiveness. For this reason he exhorts the congregation to receive him back into the communion of the Christian brotherhood, from which he had been pre-
 9 cluded by his expulsion. He assigns as a reason for this that not only the thing itself but the purpose of his writing also had been attained. In his categorical demand it was his purpose to test the fidelity of the congregation and to see if it was in every respect obedient. This fidelity he has recognized in the expulsion of the man guilty of incest; for he has to do with the congregation as such, and has no interest in compelling the individuals who do not accept the judgment of the congregation to do this. On the other hand, if the congregation forgives something, as in the present case the punishment of the transgressor, he too forgives.
 10 No doubt it was known to him that the congregation was willing to receive him back; and this general expression has only the purpose of indicating that the Apostle again feels himself in perfect harmony with them. It is true that people could malignantly say that he had already by his exhortation, in verse 8, forgiven the guilt of the evil-doer, so that he could no longer speak of an agreement on his part to the forgiveness of the sinner. This is, however, not at all the case, as it was possible to reserve for himself yet a formal agreement when he made that suggestion. However people might say that he had already declared the forgiveness of the punishment. Yet he had not done this, in order to express his judgment in the matter, but to arouse them to the same

II CORINTHIANS

[II, 11

to whom ye forgive anything, I *forgive* also : for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes *have I forgiven it* in the ¹presence of Christ ; (11) that no

¹ Or, *person*.

judgment. But he had not done this out of weak leniency, but because he pictured Christ as present in this matter, and had secured His full consent. For what had been his purpose thereby but to save himself 11 and the congregation, in which he embraces himself, from being deceived by Satan ? For they on neither side are unacquainted with the intentions which Satan in such cases entertains. He seduces people to sin ; and then it is his chief concern to hold them fast in sin, so that they do not by a penitent return secure the forgiveness of sin, but by the conviction of the unpardonable character of their sin they be cast into despair, into which he would bring them. By retaining the punishment they would only further that shrewdly devised scheme of Satan, and by their intended strictness in the condemnation of sin, in this way, merely furnish him with the occasion of securing absolute control over the sinner. This certainly had not been their purpose.

Moreover, the success of the first Epistle has shown how correctly the Apostle acted when, instead of coming in person, he wrote a letter. He wrote it, indeed, with an anxious heart, fearing the impressions which the letter would make ; and for this reason, soon after the letter had been despatched, he sent the brother Titus also to Corinth, whom he had converted (Tit. i. 4), and whom we find in his company in Gal. ii. 1, in order to report to him in the matter. Titus was to meet him as he journeyed through Macedonia, and he expected to find him already in Troas, from where the Apostle, according to Acts xvi. 11-15, sailed over to

advantage may be gained over us by Satan : for we are not ignorant of his devices.

(12) Now when I came to Troas for the ¹gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened unto me in the Lord, (13) I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother : but taking my leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia.

(14) But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in

¹ Gr. *good tidings* : see marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

12 Macedonia. When he arrived and did not find him
 13 there, his disquietude concerning the success of his letter increased, so that he was not able to proclaim the gospel concerning Christ at that place, although a very favorable opportunity for this had there been offered him. The very fact that it was not concern for his personal interests, but a question that aroused his Christian spiritual life to its innermost depths, because the matter at issue was the success of the labors of his calling in Corinth, made it impossible for him to recover his alacrity for new work. He accordingly at once bade farewell to his brethren in Troas. They had evidently urged upon him to make use of the favorable mission opportunity offered him there ; but he continued his journey to Macedonia, where he hoped to meet Titus, who was on his way back, sooner than he could have done in Troas ; and, as a matter of fact, he must have met him there, and the reports that he brought, as we shall later hear more fully, were so joyous that he bursts out in glorification of God on this account.
 14 But with this he has come to the conclusion of the introduction to this letter. In other cases the Apostle was accustomed to begin with thanksgiving for what God had done to the congregation to which he is writing. But now, too, connecting with the conclusion of his first Epistle what he there reported concerning his journey to Macedonia, upon which he entered, when, instead of coming in person, he had written them his

II CORINTHIANS

[II, 15]

triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place. (15) For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that ¹are saved, and in

¹ Or, *are being saved.*

first letter, he has brought this to this point, where he receives reports concerning the success of his letter.

With this he comes to what God has, through the success of his first letter, done to the congregation. He does not directly say for what he renders thanks to God: but the rejoicing of his heart because it has been liberated from its deep anxiety and cares is re-echoed in his thanksgivings to God, who at all times leads him and his associates to share His triumphal successes, and in this way exhibits them to all the world as won by himself. For God has done thus, by showing through what He accomplished on the occasion of the letter of the Apostle, that, as always, the anxieties of the Apostle were groundless; but not at all through the letter, but through Christ, through whom He accomplishes all of His miraculous works, and He has thus publicly exposed him in his little faith and his lack of courage. The picture of a triumphal procession, which was generally accompanied by clouds of incense, causes the Apostle to represent that through which his letter had accomplished its purpose as an incense, which proceeds everywhere from the knowledge of God, where this is made known through His messenger. Accordingly, then, it had not been the rebukes and the admonitions of this letter which had brought about this result, but what he in this letter, as everywhere all his associates do, had made known of the true character of God. But as 15 only that which is sweet smelling scatters a sweet savor, so, too, the savor of the knowledge of God can proceed only from those who themselves are filled with the savor of Christ, i. e. the knowledge of Christ, in

them that ¹perish; (16) to the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life. And who is

¹ Or, *are perishing*.

whom God has completely revealed Himself, and accordingly spread His knowledge only for the purposes of God, i. e. that God may be truly known and glorified. But then, on the other hand, this is only brought about by the working of divine grace, for which we must thank Him. He in Christ makes everywhere known His knowledge through His messengers, both among those who are delivered from eternal destruction and who are accordingly saved, as also among those who are doomed to destruction. The Apostle emphasizes this later, because the savor of Christ also that proceeded from his Epistle, had not in all cases wrought the knowledge of God which it could and was
16 intended to work. But this is not an exceptional experience. For everywhere the gospel concerning Christ is for some the savor of decay, which, because it proceeds from something dead, causes death; while for others it is a savor of life, which, because it proceeds from new life, produces new life. In plain language, the proclamation of the gospel, according to the capability to receive it, works either life or death, because the rejected blessing can only be converted into a curse, whereas the working of redemption is the product of the life-giving divine grace. Of whom the Apostle is thinking when he speaks of those in whom his letter had had the opposite effect from that which was intended and could have worked, is clear from the question which he himself puts, namely, who would have the proper qualification to produce the right redemptive effects through the gospel, and then refers to those who are not able to do so. These are the so-called Christ pupils (1 Cor. 1-12), of whose dangerous agita-

II CORINTHIANS

[II, 17]

sufficient for these things? (17) For we are not as the many,
¹corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of
God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.

¹ Or, *making merchandise of the word of God.* Comp. 2 Pet. 2. 3.

tion we have already seen traces in 1 Cor. iv. 18; ix. 2. 17
They had only taken occasion by this letter to excite
the congregation in various ways against the Apostle,
and if they did not succeed in frustrating the result to
this congregation of the word of God which Paul had
spoken in this Epistle, they had nevertheless disturbed
the personal relations of the Apostle with larger
spheres of his activity, as already appears in those who
resisted the expulsion of the man who was guilty of
incest. Here it also appears that they pretended to be
teachers of the congregation, claiming that because they
had themselves heard Christ, they were much more able
to declare the word of God than Paul, who had not per-
sonally known Christ. But they do as those who adul-
terate wine, since they, in order to secure adherents,
change it to suit the tastes of the people. We hear at
this place also that a large number of these men ap-
peared in Corinth, whereas Paul and Silvanus and
Timothy alone had preached the gospel. But that
these latter were the right men is clear from the fact
that they only speak as people with all uprightness
which makes all falsification impossible, because they
speak everything that they say before the face of God,
and as spoken by divine impulse, which guarantees the
whole truth. They speak in the living communion
with Christ, in which they are determined solely by
Him, and accordingly by God Himself. With this he
has uttered the theme for the first part of this Epistle,
which contains, on a grand scale, the self-defense of
the Apostle against these people. He founds the self-
consciousness, of which he had just spoken so strongly,

III Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or need we, as do some, epistles of commendation to you or from you? (2) Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men; (3) being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with

first on the representation of the holy character of his office.

The Christ pupils in Corinth had cast it up to the Apostle that in much that he had stated in his letter (cf. e. g. 1 Cor. xv. 10), he had only praised himself for the purpose of gaining influence in the congregation.

1 In that which he had just said concerning himself and his associates, it seemed that he was again beginning with such self-laudation. In derision, the opponents had said that he probably stood in need of this, as he had not come with letters of recommendation to Corinth, as they did, or he had tried surreptitiously to secure such from them through this self-praise. But he and his

2 companions did not stand in need of such, since the Corinthian congregation was itself their best letter of recommendation, not only in their own convictions, as they were perfectly conscious of what they had accomplished by the establishment of a congregation like that in Corinth, but also in the eyes of all mankind, who, as he indicates by the play on words, know full well what this signifies, and who can read this letter of rec-

3 ommendation. For in the case of the Corinthians it was manifest that they were such a letter of recommendation, which Christ Himself had prepared for His servants, by making the congregation what it is, through what they did in His service. In the preparation of the letter He had, as it were, made use of himself and his companions as His assistants in the writing. This letter was, indeed, not written in ink, but

II CORINTHIANS

[III, 4-5

ink, but with the Spirit of the living God ; not in tables of stone, but in tables *that are* hearts of flesh. (4) And such confidence have we through Christ to God-ward : (5) not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything as from

through the Spirit, who was active in the helpers of Christ, because He was the Spirit of the living God, who could produce the new life in the Corinthians. But because He had been working in their hearts, so that they could become the letter of recommendation for those who converted them, Paul declares that this letter had been written in their hearts. It will become clear at once by what follows, why he puts the working of this Spirit in antithesis to that of the Old Testament law, as also the letter of recommendation written through the Spirit, because it was written upon the fleshly table of the hearts, whereas the Old Testament law was written upon stone tablets. Such 4 a confidence as that which is here expressed, the messengers of the gospel have not only in their dealings with men, but also in their dealings with God, before whom they are conscious of this confidence through the same Christ, who called them to His service in the work of establishing congregations, and thereby they have been entitled to see in this a letter of recommendation for themselves. True, they do not have the ability 5 in themselves to boast that any of these successes are their own work, but their ability comes from God, who has called them into the service of Christ, and thereby has enabled them to count as their success what they have achieved through Him. For He Himself empowers them to be the servants of the new covenant, as has been promised already in Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, in which these successes are to be achieved, because they are no longer servants of the letter of a law, which can

¹ on the end of that which ² was passing away : (14) but their ³ minds were hardened : for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil ⁴ remaineth, it not being revealed *to them* that it is done away in Christ. (15) But unto this day, whensoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their

¹ Or, unto.

² Or, *was being done away*.

³ Or, *thoughts*.

⁴ Or, *remaineth unlifted which veil is done away*.

had of the glory of his service, directs attention to the fact that for the children of Israel at that time the end of this, his service, was yet to remain hidden, although it was to give place to another service, and for this reason was to cease. But however boldly the servants of the gospel proclaim that with their service the end of the service of the law has come, the children of Israel do not to the present day understand this. Because they *will* not believe the divine judgment of hardening has come over them, so that they now *cannot* believe, since their mind, which is constantly hardening itself against the divine truth, now has been completely dulled against all influence from this side. In this way, as it were, this same covering, which at that time hid the end of the glory of their divine service to the children of Israel, has remained until the present day. However now it does not conceal the glory on the face of Moses, but hides the true significance of the law, although not to the servants of the New Covenant, who openly declare the glory to have passed away, but to the children of the Old Covenant, when they hear the law read in the synagogues, without the transitory nature of this law becoming manifest to them. For in Christ, and in Him alone, this covering was removed, as it had become clear that the end of the law had come in Him. But Israel rejected Christ; and for this reason the covering did not lie upon Moses when he was read in the synagogue, whom the servants of the Spirit correctly understood to mean, that the glory of his

II CORINTHIANS

[III, 14-18]

heart. (16) But whosoever ¹it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. (17) Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (18) But we all, with unveiled face ²beholding as in a mirror the glory

¹ Or, a man shall turn.

² Or, reflecting as a mirror.

service was to be hidden only to the Israel of his day, but was found upon their hearts, which had become incapable of understanding correctly what was read from Moses. It was accordingly a matter of greatest im- 16 portance that their hearts be converted to the Lord, and that these turn away from seeking their own righteousness to the desire for a Redeemer and redemption; for then the covering would be removed all around, and their hearts would at once become receptive for the conviction that the significance of the law had now come to an end. For by their conversion to the 17 Lord they had been converted to that Spirit who proceeded from Him and made His servants the servants of this Spirit. But wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there too is freedom from the law, because this Spirit takes the place of the law, in order to effect what the law was to effect but could not. With the lively experience of this freedom, the knowledge of the end of the law will come of itself, whereby the covering will be removed from their hearts. It is clear that this whole discussion was called forth by those Christ pupils, who in this point still had the covering of Moses upon their hearts, which hid to them the transitory significance of the law, as it does to the whole people of Israel to the present day. But although the day on which this covering is to be removed, for which Paul hoped with a certainty (Rom. xi. 25, 26), is yet in 18 the future for this people, we Christians, on the other hand, all see, with uncovered faces, the glory of the Lord, before which the glory of Moses had disap-

of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

IV Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we

peared. True, we do not yet see it as we will one day see it, face to face, but only, as it were, in the mirror of the gospel. For this reason it was possible that to those who, like these Christ pupils, did not yet fully understand, the full glory of Christ is yet hidden, because, as Paul states by using the figure of a covering in another way, their faces were hidden by a covering of prejudices. But we, he continues triumphantly, experience it as a matter of fact, that we see the full spiritual glory of the Lord. For as the glory on the countenance of Moses was nothing but then reflection of the glory of God, which he had seen on the mountains, thus we, by looking in faith on this glory of Christ, will be converted into the same image, since His Spirit works a new life in us, which knows itself to be free from the law, because of itself it is made like to the image of our exalted Lord. But then one glory succeeds another glory, since the heavenly glory, too, into which He had entered, will eventually be revealed in us, just as surely as this transformation comes from the Lord, whose essence is Spirit, and who accordingly will also transform our present bodily nature into full spiritual glory, as He had transfigured His own.

Paul makes an application of what he has discussed to the slanders which the Christ pupils had spread concerning him. For the very reason that he and his associates have the service of this evangelical proclamation, in the mirror of which we see the glory of the Lord in such a way, that in the image of His spiritual glory we ourselves are transformed, they did not lose courage to boast of their office, even if this is

II CORINTHIANS

[IV, 2-8]

obtained mercy, we faint not: (2) but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (8) And even if our ¹gospel

¹ See marginal note on ch. 2. 12.

misinterpreted. For they had not usurped this office, nor did they believe that they had merited that they be entrusted with it, but that it was God's grace which had given them this office, as also the ability to fulfil its duties. But, as they did have this office, they ² once for all had renounced everything that was a shame, even if this be so carefully hidden that it could not be seen by the eyes of man. For this reason they did not walk in deception, which sought to gain the approbation of men by illegitimate means; as they did not falsify the word of God in order to make it palatable to mankind, as some had perhaps charged him with doing, because of his boasting of himself and releasing his converts from the strict demands of the law. They, indeed, tried to win the good-will of men, but only by the proclamation of the unadulterated truth of the gospel. This was not a thing whereby they subserved the selfish interests of men: the conscience of each one, however, would testify to him that this preaching had made them to be what they should be, and for this reason must have been the whole truth. In the end, everything that they did for the purpose of gaining the good-will of men was done in the presence of God, i. e. in the constant consciousness of their responsibility to Him. But now the objection would be ³ raised that their preaching was by no means accepted by all people as the proclamation of the truth. It still was hidden, and remained hidden, to many, that their gospel is the truth. But the question was,

is veiled, it is veiled in them that ¹perish: (4) in whom the God of this ²world hath blinded the ³minds of the unbelieving, ⁴that the ⁵light of the ⁶gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them. (5) For we

¹ Or, are perishing.

² Or, age.

³ Gr. thoughts. Ch. 8. 14; 11. 2.

⁴ Or, that they should not see the light. . . image of God.

⁵ Gr. illumination.

⁶ See marginal note on ch. 2. 12.

among what kind of people? And, in reply, Paul could say that it is among those who are lost. To this class certainly belong those whose minds had been blinded as to the knowledge of the truth by the ⁴ Devil, who ruled the world like a god, especially among the heathen, namely, the unbelieving Gentiles, who, as all know, will be destroyed. But if there are also others to whom the gospel of Paul was hidden in its truth, as it was to these Christ pupils, these, too, would belong to that class who are to be condemned; and the cause of this is the same as in the case of the unbelievers. For this is what the Devil aimed at when he blinded them. The light that emanated from the gospel was to be prevented from casting its rays into the hearts of men. But the gospel proclaimed nothing but the glory of Christ, which, because He was the image of the Father, was one similar to God's. As the enemy of God concealed this glory before the unbelievers, he will also have hidden it from those whose doctrine of the law showed that this spiritual glory of Christ had not yet risen for them. ⁵ It was true that some said that he did not proclaim Christ, but only himself, because he was constantly speaking of his personal experiences on the way to Damascus, on which occasion the gospel was made known to him. But he did this only because the Messiah Jesus, as the exalted Lord, had appeared to him there in order that he should proclaim Him as the Lord. On account of this Jesus, he, as well as his

II CORINTHIANS

[IV, 6-7]

preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your ¹servants ²for Jesus' sake. (6) Seeing it is God, that said, ³Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

(7) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the

¹ Gr. *bondservants*. Comp. 1 Cor. 9. 19.

² Some ancient authorities read *through Jesus*.

³ Gen. i. 3.

associates, desired to be called their servants, because, in order to gain confessors of Christ, he served them with the gospel. But the messengers are by the divine revelation capable and responsible for this. The new morning of creation has begun. Once upon a 6 time, on the first day of creation, when everything was covered with darkness, God said: Let there be light (Gen. i. 3). Thus He had now also spoken, and it has become light in their hearts. But this He had done so that light proceed from their knowledge of the glory of God that was seen in the countenance of Christ. He realized this purpose of God through his proclamation of His gospel. For this reason it can only be the blinding caused by the Devil, if people asserted that they were not able to know this gospel as that which it was, because in its true nature it remains hidden to these Christ pupils.

The only thing that could make the Apostle and his 7 companions lose courage, notwithstanding the fact that they had thus been preferred, were the distresses that were connected with their work. The reason why these lay so heavy upon them was to be found in the fact that they possessed the treasure of the revealed truth that had been given to them for the purpose of spreading it further in earthen vessels, i. e., in their weak and fragile bodily nature, the disproportion of which to the greatness of his gift and mission the Apostle especially no doubt felt strongly. But he recognizes in this the

exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves; (8) *we are* pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; (9) pursued, yet not ¹ forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; (10) always bearing about in the body the ² dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. (11) For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

¹ Or. *left behind*.

² Gr. *putting to death*.

divine purpose of making clear that the power that is necessary to accomplish and to endure everything that his calling requires was of God and was not of themselves, as it might appear if a powerful organization supported them. He describes what they must endure in their career, so that without the constant inner and outward assistance of God they would be compelled to
8 despair. They were indeed in every way oppressed, but yet were never driven into the corner in such a way that they could not find the way out. They were constantly placed in embarrassing positions and yet were never entirely without counsel for deliverance. They were persecuted, and yet never deserted by the divine
9 help. They were cast upon the ground by those who pursued them, and yet not destroyed. Because a life in constant danger of death in the eyes of the Apostle
10 appeared to be a state of being dead to life, he saw in this condition that they must bear in their bodies the liability to death endured by Jesus. But this had only the purpose, in the constant repetition of the deliverance from the dangers of death, that the life that should overcome death, which Jesus received in His resurrection,
11 should be made manifest in their body. He explains this bold statement in a more simple manner, to mean that they, although living in the body, are yet constantly given unto death, i. e. into the extreme danger of death for Jesus' sake, so that even in their flesh, which

II CORINTHIANS

[IV, 12-15]

(12) So then death worketh in us, but life in you. (13) But having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, ¹ I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak; (14) knowing that he that raised up ² the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you. (15) For all things are for your sakes, that the grace, being multiplied through ³ the many may cause the thanksgiving to abound unto the glory of God.

¹ Ps. cxvi. 10.
³ Gr. *the more*.

² Some ancient authorities omit *the Lord*.

by its very nature was easily susceptible of death, the life of Jesus, that had been restored through divine deliverance, manifests itself. But since a life that was always being lived for the purpose of being given again into death, was nothing but a continuous dying, only death was active in them; whereas that life which had been again given them by divine deliverance was utilized 12 constantly only for their continued activity and accordingly was not active in them, who are constantly compelled to submit to death, but in the readers. This could possibly move the Apostles in the end to lose courage and to give up their calling, which brings to them constant danger of death; but they had the same 13 spirit, which works joy, of which the prophet in Ps. cxvi. 10 wrote. For this reason they clung to this confidence, which exhorted them at all times to a further proclamation of the gospel. In this they were strengthened by the conviction, that even if actual death should be at hand, He who had awakened Jesus from the dead, 14 would also awaken them and would present them before the judgment-seat of God together with the readers, who would be compelled to testify against their teachers, if these, out of fear of death, had ceased their activity. For all these deliverances the servants of 15 God experienced for the sake of the readers, so that the gifts of God, that constantly became richer in them

IV, 16-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(16) Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.
(17) For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory;
(18) while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

through the increasing number of those who, in consequence of this, experienced the blessing of their continued Apostolic activity, made the thanksgiving for this superabundantly rich to the glory of God. For this reason, then, because everything that they experienced concerned the deliverance of the readers and the honor of God, these oppressions can as little depress the Apostle, as did the slanders which were spread because they boasted on account of their glorious office. But, rather, even if their bodies, on account of their natural weaknesses, should gradually be worn out through these constant oppressions, they nevertheless
16 daily experience inwardly a new encouragement through these deliverances and through the blessing
17 which these brought for the congregation. For it was the absolute certainty of all Christian life, that the oppression here led to glory beyond. But if we consider, that the former was only momentary and accordingly soon disappeared, but that the latter was eternal, and how the former was only light over against the burden of the latter, we could learn, that the former was repaid in a surpassing way by the latter, and constantly became such more and more. But this, of
18 course, was only possible in those whose eyes were not firmly fixed upon that which is visible, but upon that which is invisible, and hence for the Christian hope, which, in consequence of the strength secured in the oppression, is only all the more certain of its goal.

II CORINTHIANS

[V, 1-2]

¶ For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which

But the fact that our body was being worn out draws the eyes away of itself from that which is visible, the short duration of which was so manifest, and directs them to the invisible, which by its nature is eternal.

The Apostle points out the ground for this willing- 1
ness to suffer. He presupposes that, contrary to his expectation of living to see the return of the Lord, the gradual wearing out of his body would result in his death. In order to designate this body as one of those visible blessings given for a time, Paul calls it an earthly dwelling-house, which consists of a tent that is raised only for temporary use and is intended soon to be taken down. This dwelling-place we owe to our earthly parents, from whom we are born as flesh from flesh. Over against this our heavenly body is designated as a building which comes from God, and because it is not made with the hands of men, is eternal. To this invisible possession of hope the Apostle can raise his eye as his earthly body is being gradually worn out; for this is not only destined for him by God, but it has already been realized in the transformed body of Christ, and he possesses it above, although this heavenly habitation could only be occupied at the return of the Lord, just as surely as he could possess an earthly house in which he was prevented from entering for the time being. For the existence of this tabernacle we have also a guarantee 2
in the longing and sighing of all the Christians to live to see the return of Christ in order then (without first leaving our earthly habitation in death), to take possession of this heavenly dwelling. This longing, because

is from heaven : (3) if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. (4) For indeed we that are in this ¹ tabernacle do groan, ²being burdened ; not for that we would be

¹ Or, *bodily frame*. Comp. Wisd. 9. 15.

² Or, *being burdened, in that we would not be unclothed, but would be clothed upon*.

it was something common to all Christians, could possibly be based on mistaken presuppositions and would be entirely without a purpose if these heavenly dwellings would not be ready for us. But it was based also on the ardent desire not to die first, but at the return of Christ to experience the transformation of our earthly body into the heavenly. With a sudden change of figure Paul thinks of the body that is ready for us in heaven and which is brought down to us, as a garment which is being prepared for us there, and which, if we live to see the return, will be at once put over that which we carry on us in our earthly life. In this it is indeed presupposed, as is indicated by the expression of the Apostle, and what is stated as something self-evident and intentional, that, according to the nature of things, that heavenly habitation was also a garment, which, if we have once put it on, will protect us against the nakedness of our condition without a body that we feared. The Apostle did not wish to explain away the bitterness of death, which had come into the world only as a punishment of sin. The compulsory separation of the body from the soul remains as something unnatural, to which all natural feelings were antagonistic.

4 For those, too, who dwelt yet in the tent of the earthly body and were not at all yet in danger of its being taken down, felt themselves at all times oppressed by the uncertainty, whether they should live to see the return of the Lord or must first die. For this longing desire on our part was based on the wish not first to be deprived of our earthly body, but at once to put over

II CORINTHIANS

[V, 5-8]

unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that, what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. (5) Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. (6) Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (7) (for we walk by faith, not by ¹sight); (8) we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.

¹ Gr. *appearance*.

this the heavenly, so that the mortality of the one would be at once transformed into the immortality of the other. This indeed presupposes that we are no longer subject 5 to death as the punishment for sin. But God, who has given us the Spirit as the pledge of the heavenly consummation, has surely thereby declared that through the atoning death of Christ we have been delivered from the guilt and the punishment of sin, and have thus been prepared, without death, at once to pass into everlasting life. For this reason we at all times have good courage, and know that really we are now already at home with the transfigured Lord, for the participation 6 in whose heavenly life we have already been prepared, and, accordingly, as long as we are yet at home in the body, are separated from our heavenly and real home. For our life here upon earth is indeed filled with the 7 certain conviction, that our Lord is living above in heaven, but this does not result from the seeing of His glory, which can only begin above, when we are united with Him. But this separation from Him makes this 8 abidance in the body until His return, which seemed to us so desirable in order to be relieved from dying, something that we can entirely dispense with. For this reason we in all cases have good courage, and more yet than we have the desire of living to see the return of the Lord, we have the desire to be out of the body, which presupposes that death will soon be at hand, and to be with

(9) Wherefore also we ¹make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him. (10) For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things *done* ²in the body, according to what he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

(11) Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God; and I hope that

¹ Gr. *are ambitious*. See Rom. 15. 20 marg.

² Gr. *through*.

the Lord. For the communion with the Lord, which takes place at once at death, is certainly infinitely more precious than that which we here already have through the Spirit, since this is at all times weakened and lessened by the sin that in such measure dwells in the flesh. For this reason, on the other hand, the wish at the return of the Lord to enter directly upon the heavenly body (which would make it necessary for us to do without this complete communion with the Lord still longer) must be set aside. In this condition of affairs the Apostle seeks his honor only in this, be it that he may abide in the body, or be he compelled by death to leave this earthly home, that he be pleasing to the Lord in all things, whatever He may determine in his case. For all of us, those who are yet alive and those who are dead, will be called before the judgment-seat of the returning Christ, before whom it will be decided whether we have been pleasing to Him or not. For each one of us is then to receive his reward or punishment for what he has accomplished during his life upon earth through the body, in which he has dwelt. According to that which has here been the contents of his life, be this good or evil, he will be recompensed. For in the final judgment the question can in all cases be only this, to see if the grace which we have received has attained its real purposes in us.

11 As Paul and his companions are well acquainted with the fear of the Lord, before whose judgment-seat they

II CORINTHIANS

[V, 12-13]

we are made manifest also in your consciences. (12) We are not again commending ourselves unto you, but *speak* as giving you occasion of glorying on our behalf, that ye may have wherewith to answer them that glory in appearance, and not in heart. (13) For whether we ¹are beside ourselves, it is

¹ Or, *were*.

must appear, i. e. that and why He is to be feared, their method of carrying on their work can only have in view, to please the Lord in every way. Even if they try to convince men of this, as they do in this present letter, they yet know, that it is not necessary to do this before God, to whom their innermost desires are known. But the Apostle hopes that this will also become manifest to his readers, at least, if against the whisperings of their opponents, they ask their own conscience as to whether it is right to call into question the purity of his motives. People will indeed say, that by describing 12
their official work in this way they again will want only to praise themselves. But in reality the messengers do this in order to show them for what reasons the readers should boast in their favor. The Apostle presupposes that they would, over against the arrogance and the suspicion of those Christ pupils, like to boast of their own teachers, but only do not exactly know how they are to do this. For these, to whom they would like to boast of their teachers, boast of altogether different things from those of which Paul and his companions boast, namely, of things which belong only to the external life of man and have nothing to do with the heart, the efforts of which, that proceed from the fear of the Lord alone, the Apostles consider as worthy of praise. Let these people judge the messengers as they will, and may they consider their holy zeal as an exaggeration that borders on insanity, or let them 18
concede to them that they are entirely of the sane

unto God ; or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you. (14) For the love of Christ constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died ; (15) and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. (16) Wherefore we henceforth know no man after

mind, the messengers boast of only one thing, namely, what they do in the service of God and for the benefit of the congregation. But that this is so is not a merit
14 of their own. It is the love of Christ that has been shown us and which keeps them in check and does not
15 permit them to act in any other way. They certainly have attained to the conviction that Christ has died out of love for all, and that accordingly all those for whose benefit He has died, are delivered from death. His atoning death has certainly brought about this, that it is just as good as though they themselves had died and therefore no longer need to die, because if the latter were the case the death of Christ would not have accrued to their good. But this can have had only the one object, that those who are now alive, instead of being subject to death on account of their sins, henceforth no longer live to themselves. For through giving up His life for them, He certainly has bought their life as His property, and He has been awakened, in order that they may serve Him, who lives forever. In His service it is possible to live only for Him and the brethren.

16 As this purpose has then been attained in the case of all who have learned to understand the true purpose of the death of Christ, the Apostle and his associates then can henceforth no longer judge those, and especially themselves of whom they know this as a certainty according to that which they are by their natural and

II CORINTHIANS

[V, 17-19]

the flesh : even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know *him* so no more. (17) Wherefore if any man is in Christ, ¹*he is a new creature* : the old things are passed away ; behold, they are become new. (18) But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation ; (19) to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having ²committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

¹ Or, there is a new creation.

² Or, placed in us.

human character, but only according to what they have become through the compulsion of the power of Christ's love. They themselves had at one time learned to know Christ only as what He seemed to be in His human and earthly appearance, namely, a crucified felon ; but since they have learned to know the true importance of His death, they now no longer recognize Him as such. If any one lives in this com- 17
munion of love with Christ, in which alone this purpose of His death is realized, then he can no longer be regarded as what he is by nature. For in this communion with Christ, he has experienced a new creation, according to which his entire old being has ceased to exist and everything has become new. This is true especially of the Apostle and his associates, when they boast of the spirit in which they now are doing their work. This is indeed not their merit, but God's operation in them ; 18
and God no longer judges them according to that which they are by nature, namely, as His enemies on account of their sins. For He has reconciled Himself to them through Christ, and has shown this clearly by the fact that He has entrusted them with the office of reconciliation. For the atonement, which has been accom- 19
plished by Christ, and which they are to proclaim, does not pertain to them alone, but God in Christ has rec-

(20) We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. (21) Him who knew no sin he made *to be* sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

onciled with Himself the whole world, that had fallen away from Him in their sins, remitting for Christ's sake to men all their transgressions, through which they had become His enemies, and in this way making them to be well-pleasing to Him. Indeed, He expressly established the office which preaches this reconciliation to all men, that they should escape and be able to return to the relation of peace with God. It is the
20 Apostle and his companions whom He has made to be His messengers, so that the sacrifice of Christ's love be not in vain, and He now admonishes people through them to this effect. On behalf of Christ, and in order to advance His cause, they now beg of men to seek for the grace of God and for His forgiveness, and thereby to be reconciled with God. That God is at all times
21 ready for this, he has proved by the fact, that for our sake, in the death of Christ, He treated Him, who, as a matter of personal experience, knew nothing of sin, as though He were sinful through and through. For in this way He has made it possible that we, who have as little righteousness in us as Christ had sin, become perfectly righteous in His eyes. Of course this is a righteousness which is attributed to us only on the basis of the atoning death of Christ, and which completely reconciles Him with men. To offer this reconciliation of God to all men, is the mission of the messengers of God, in which only they now, after they have themselves become new men, through His grace can serve God and the readers.

II CORINTHIANS

[VI, 1-4

VI And working together *with him* we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain (2) (for he saith,

¹ At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee,

And in a day of salvation did I succor thee :

behold, now is the acceptable time ; behold, now is the day of salvation) : (3) giving no occasion of stumbling in anything, that our ministration be not blamed ; (4) but in everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God, in much ² patience,

¹ Is. xlix. 8.

² Or, *steadfastness*.

Now follows a description of the manner in which 1 the Apostles do their work. As they are laborers together with God, who has done so much to reconcile the world with Himself, they now admonish not only the world to accept this reconciliation, but also the readers not to receive, in a fruitless way, the grace of God which has been given to them. But this would be the case if the readers would not permit this grace to work in them, as this grace alone would bring them to the goal of their deliverance. He reminds them of 2 Is. xlix. 8, emphasizing that the time that is there prophesied as well pleasing to God, and in which He will hear their petitions for deliverance, had just begun, and should be utilized both by the messengers of the gospel and by their hearers. Therefore he resumes the 3 discussion of their work by emphasizing the fact that they endeavor, as first of all directed to this end, in no matter to entice any body to anti-Christian conduct whereby the service with which they are entrusted might be justly criticised. Evidently the objection had been raised to him and to his associates, that by their preaching of freedom from the law they were encouraging an indifferent life. On the contrary, in every point 4 they seek to gain followers for themselves by a conduct that is befitting the servants of God. Thus Paul recounts endurances amid the oppressions which have befallen them as one of the most important things,

in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, (5) in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; (6) in pureness, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned, (7) in the word of truth, in the power of God; ¹by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, (8) by glory and dishonor,

¹Gr. *through*.

5 mentioning these in three ascending stages, namely, the sufferings which condemnation by the courts or mob violence brings upon them; and then their needs, on account of their service, that they are compelled even at night to do the toilsome work of their crafts; and that even under these circumstances, often they are in want. In the following details, it is not allowable, as is the case in all such lists, to hunt
6 for a fixed run of thought. With the model purity of morals in one's own conduct the Apostle combines the correct knowledge, which the servant of God must have; with the long-suffering which is not frightened by the continued failures or by hostility, as is generally the case, he combines the ever ready kindness and gentleness. Only after this he speaks of the Holy Ghost, who works all of these characteristics of the servants of God, because he intends at the close to mention the pure love, which is the first of all His fruit.
7 Naturally, too, that way of speaking which bears the stamp of full truth comes from Him, as is seen already from the fact that the power of God, through which such speaking accomplishes its purposes, is associated with it, because this is inspired by the Spirit. Those weapons with which he battles for the truth have this same character of righteousness, be these weapons of
8 offense or defense. These latter, too, he needs, as his activity must pass through honor and disgrace, and through evil report and good report. For this reason, over against that which he and his associates are, in the

II CORINTHIANS

[VI, 9-11]

by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and *yet* true ; (9) as unknown, and *yet* well known ; as dying, and behold, we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; (10) as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.

(11) Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is

judgment of his opponents, consisting perhaps chiefly of these Christ pupils, he states that they really are. People call them deceivers, and yet they are truthful. 9 People call them obscure people, of whom nobody knows anything ; and yet they are known as to their real character and work by others. People point with the finger of contempt at them as they show their submission to God in their constant danger of death ; and yet they live, as the Apostle cries out in triumph. Indeed, people declare it to be a manifest punishment from God on account of their sins, that they must suffer so much ; and yet their success shows that they are not thereby to be put to death, but only under such wholesome discipline are to be trained to be more and more the worthy servants of God. People call them misanthropic, mis- 10 erable paupers ; and yet they are at all times joyful and can make many rich, in the higher sense, and in reality have all things as their own, since, in the possession of the perfect redemption, they can utilize all things.

The Apostle makes the transition to the second, or exhortatory part of the Epistle, by appealing most touchingly to his Corinthians, the deep excitement of which appeal is already indicated by the address that mentions their name. As he had in the preceding 11 generally spoken also in the name of his fellow-laborers in the congregation, he here, too, with this in view, states that their mouth is standing wide open over against their readers, i. e. that he has spoken with perfect openness to the congregation, and that he intends

enlarged. (12) Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections. (13) Now for a recompense in like kind (I speak as unto *my* children), be ye also enlarged.

to continue to do so. If in consequence of this, their hearts, too, had become wide over against the congregation, he intends thereby to say that, after he had in this way openly declared himself, he embraces his readers again with the full love of his heart, whereas their
12 former conduct had closed his heart to them. They have now not merely a small place in his heart; he embraces them all with a wide and a rich love. But, on the other hand, their heart has become so contracted that there is no room in it for him and his companions. Evidently the severe letter had its effect; but their love for him had become cold. It is impossible that the Christ pupils could, through their slanders, have found such an influence as would compel him to defend himself against them so fully if the old love,
13 which had formerly united them with the Apostle, had remained unshaken in their hearts. He declares this to be a recompense for his feelings towards them, which they owe him if they would repay him by the same feelings. He merely demands of them, what a father can demand of his children, when he says that their hearts should also be unlocked again and be opened wide to him. But this he demands not only as a satisfaction for his heart, but in order that, with an open and willing heart, they may receive the admonitions that now follow, and in which he has opened his mouth without restraint. For in these the matter at issue is the central thought of the entire first letter, and that had through his strictness caused the greatest offense, namely, his warnings against the sin of heathen contamination.

II CORINTHIANS

[VI, 14-17]

(14) Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? (15) And what concord hath Christ with ¹Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? (16) And what agreement hath a ²temple of God with idols? for we are a ²temple of the living God; even as God said, ³I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) ⁴Wherefore

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,

And touch no unclean thing;
And I will receive you,

¹ Gr. *Beliar*.

² Or, *sanctuary*.

³ Lev. xxvi. 12; Ex. xxix. 45; Ezek. xxxvii. 27; Jer. xxxi. 1. ⁴ Is. lli. 11.

They are no longer to pull under the same yoke with 14 the unbelievers, under which the heathens too are walking. He describes the close communion with the Gentile neighbors, which was constantly proving to be the cause of a lapse into the sin of heathendom, with a reference to Deut. xxii. 10, where it is forbidden that different kinds of animals are to be worked under the same yoke, which would often be working under a strange yoke. Righteousness, as the power that rules supreme in Christianity, can certainly not pull together at the same yoke with heathen immorality; Christian enlightenment cannot have social communion with the darkness of heathendom. As Christ and the Devil can have no ground 15 of harmony with each other, so the confessors of the former and the servants of the latter, namely, the unbelievers, can have nothing in common. The temple of God certainly does not tolerate idols; and, in contrast to the dead idols, they are a temple of the living God, according to Lev. xxvi. 11, 12, and He intends to live among them and be their God, who has made them His people. But, on the contrary, God had demanded already in Is. lli. 11, a complete separation 17

(18) ¹ And will be to you a Father,
 And ye shall be to me sons and daughters,
 saith the Lord Almighty.

VII (1) Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us
 cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit,
 perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

(2) ² Open your hearts to us : we wronged no man, we cor-

¹ Hos. i. 10 ; Isa. xliii. 6.

² Gr. *Make room for us.*

from all contaminating idolatrous uncleanness, and
 18 promised for this that He, like a father, will make them to
 1 be His children, according to 2 Sam. vii. 14. Although
 Paul sees the fulfilment of these promises already in
 their election and in their adoption as children, he nev-
 ertheless considers that the promises will find their
 full realization only in the consummation of salvation,
 which accordingly, even for the Christians, continue
 to be promises. In order that these may be fulfilled
 in them, they were to cleanse themselves from all
 contamination in body and spirit. The body is con-
 taminated by the heathen sin of gluttony and fornica-
 tion; the new spiritual life by a coldness, pride, and
 ambition. The first Epistle shows throughout how
 much such admonitions were needed on every side in
 the Corinthian congregation ; but the earnest character
 of these admonitions is softened by the way in which
 he includes himself in the demand to heed them. In
 this way alone can they, in the fear of the Lord, bring
 to its full development that state of holiness into which
 they have been brought by baptism, and which ex-
 cludes all from a full share in the kingdom of God who
 do not strive with all earnestness for this end.

2 The demand that they shall understand the Apostle
 aright implies, that the preceding admonition is not to
 be understood, as though the mingling with Gentile life
 was still as bad as it had been when he wrote the first
 letter. True, he cannot retract anything of what he

II CORINTHIANS

[VII, 3-5]

rupted no man, we took advantage of no man. (3) I say it not to condemn *you*: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die together and live together. (4) Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying on your behalf: I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction.

(5) For even when we were come into Macedonia our flesh

said in that Epistle and which Titus only confirmed as a result of his visit. They have done nobody any wrong by an exaggerated charge; they have not brought the man guilty of incest to destruction; they have not by their strictness done more harm than good. These had probably been the accusations which had been raised against him and which were made on the basis of his first letter. But what he had said in the preceding concerning mingling with Gentile doings was not said for their condemnation, as though things stood with 3 them in this respect as badly as they formerly did. For if this had been the case he could not have told them, that his heart embraced them in love, so that if it should be a necessity he would die with them and did not want to live without them. Notwithstanding the renewed admonition he is full of confidence, that they 4 will follow these. He already glories in them as those to whom he needs only to speak a word in order to bring them back upon the right track. All the anxieties that he had in the past entertained in reference to the congregation have disappeared; all the cares and the disturbed state of mind which had tormented him on their account, they have changed into transcendent joy, which makes him forget even the extreme external oppression in which he finds himself. The reasons for all this were reports which Titus had brought from Corinth, as the Apostle had already indicated in ii. 14. He again reminds them of the fact, that then, when he 5

had no relief, but *we were* afflicted on every side ; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. (6) Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, *even* God, comforted us by the ¹ coming of Titus ; (7) and not by his ¹ coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me ; so that I rejoiced yet more. (8) For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it : though I did regret it (² for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season).

¹ Gr. *presence*. Comp. 2. Thess. 2. 9.

² Some ancient authorities omit *for*.

came from Troas to Macedonia, he could not find that rest in his heart, which he wanted so much (ii. 13), at least as far as his natural man is concerned. He had oppression enough from without, the contests with the enemies, who endangered his life ; and from within, the fears concerning the impression made by his letter, which tormented him on account of the condition of the congregation at that time. But God, of whom the prophet says (Is. xlix. 13.) that He comforts
6 the miserable, had compassion on him and his companions, when they were so weighed down by anxieties, as Titus finally came. He is comforted not only that he finds his friend returned in good health, concerning whose long absence he had been worried,
7 but also on account of the anxiety as to the reception which had been accorded Titus in Corinth. For he could not speak enough of the longing with which the congregation looked forward to the coming of the Apostle and of the disappointment which prevailed, when instead of coming himself, he despatched a severe letter ; and of their zeal to make all possible amends, in order that, in the place of the sorrow that they had caused him by so many things, he would again find joy
8 in them. For under their circumstance he can no longer feel sorry that he had saddened them by his severe letter. He cannot deny that in this time of unrest and

II CORINTHIANS

[VII, 9-11]

(9) I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance ; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. (10) For godly sorrow worketh repentance ¹unto salvation, a *repentance* which bringeth no regret : but the sorrow of the world worketh death. (11) For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest

¹ Or, *unto a salvation which bringeth no regret.*

anxiety he had oftentimes repented, that he had written so severely ; but now he sees what a blessed result this letter had brought. He sees, he starts out to say, that this letter, even if it saddened them for a short time—but he corrects himself ; for he wants to say more. He wants to say that he rejoices, naturally not because 9 they had been saddened, but that their sorrow had produced a change of mind. For this was a sadness such as God intended, when He directed him to write in such severe terms. It would not have been God's purpose thereby to inflict any harm to His congregation by such sadness, which the letter of the Apostle, with 10 which his assistants of course agreed, had to cause. For a sadness that is in harmony with the will of God always produces a change of heart, so that none can be delivered from the destruction that continuance in sin will always bring ; and such a change of heart can surely not be the object of regret on his part nor on theirs. Only the sadness of such kind as the world in its hostility to God has is in discord with the will of God, because this deplores only the consequences of sin, but not sin itself, and because the sin that is not repented of leads only to the death of the sinner, as the Apostle expresses himself, probably with a reference to the fact, that the despairing man often resorts to suicide.

Only now the Apostle describes his abounding joy 11 on account of the success of his letter, by which God

care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter. (12) So although I wrote unto

at that time triumphed over all his anxieties, (ii. 14). What a blessing the sorrow that was caused at that time by this letter in accordance with the will of God produced in them! He can refer to their own experience, to show how great their zeal was to make good again the offense caused by the man guilty of incest, in contrast with their former indifference. He cannot find words enough for this, and constantly corrects the expression, which in each case appears too weak for him. They had defended themselves by the plea that their former failure to excommunicate this man was not based on any excuse for his sin; and now they express their deepest indignation at the fear that they had entertained of the punishment of the Apostle which they had deserved, and their anxiety to make everything right, as well as their indignation on his account who had disgraced the congregation by this sin and which had at last led to the punishment demanded by the Apostle, consisting in the expulsion of the man guilty of incest. In all of these ways they proved that they personally are innocent in this matter. True, the Apostle has here in mind only the congregation as a whole, and here charitably ignores the fact that a minority in the congregation had resisted this punishment and had thought the demand of the Apostle too severe, as they themselves had also been offended at this first, and only through the explanation made by

12 Titus had been led to a complete change of opinion. They had probably at first thought, that he had allowed himself to utter words that were so harsh in his indigna-

II CORINTHIANS

[VII, 13-14]

you, *I wrote* not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God. (13) Therefore we have been comforted: and in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit hath been refreshed by you all. (14) For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf, I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things to you in truth, so our glorying also

tion on account of the man convicted of incest, in his interest for the marriage rights of the man against whom the wrong had been committed. But he would with full right claim, that he had not written for the one reason nor for the other, as he had nothing to do with the legal side of the case, something that he in his expression particularly emphasizes, since through his demand for the exclusion of the man guilty of incest from the congregation he had deprived himself of all opportunity of exercising any influence on him and of all possibility of securing satisfaction for the man who had been wronged. He would rather assure them, that he had only brought the whole affair before the congregation, and that, too, with the full consciousness of his responsibility before God, before whose countenance he was writing, in order that their zeal not to cause shame but honor to their teachers would become manifest. 18 Indeed, in addition to this assurance there was something still more important, namely, the still greater joy on account of the joy of Titus, whose Christian spiritual life by this visit in Corinth had been strengthened by them all, through the impression which he had received of their Christian life. For if the Apostle in his presence had in any way glorified himself by his satisfaction in the fact that he was the founder of such a congregation (and this he had publicly and frequently 14 done as he had a right to do), he has not in doing this

which I made before Titus was found to be truth. (15) And his affection is more abundantly toward you, while he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. (16) I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you.

VIII Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of

been put to shame. On the contrary, as everything that he and his companions have spoken in their labors in the congregation has been spoken in full uprightness, so, too, all that they had spoken in praise of the congregation in the presence of Titus, in order to encourage him for his difficult mission, has proved to be true. In consequence of this the heart of Titus was turned all
15 the more to the congregation, when he recalled their obedience and the manner in which they received him with fear and trembling, in order that they might not fail in anything that the Apostle expected of them and which he had promised to his representative. He rejoices that in every respect he can now be of good cheer and can find full confidence in their reference to
16 what he can now expect of them. For this reason also he is content with the one admonition with which he began, and he no longer enters upon separate points in which there are still weaknesses in the congregation. Only one thing yet he desires to discuss. For Titus in addition to all other matters had also been instructed to begin among them with the collection for Jerusalem, and in this respect the letter and the explanations of Titus had not entirely been as successful as he had wished. For this reason he proceeds to discuss at length the subject of this collection matter.

The Apostle describes the success of his collection in Macedonia as an example to the Corinthians.
1 However, this success he and his companions did not

II CORINTHIANS

[VIII, 2-5]

Macedonia; (2) how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their ¹liberality. (3) For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, *they gave* of their own accord, (4) beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: (5) and *this*, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the

¹ Gr. *singleness*. See Rom. 12. 8.

ascribe to themselves, but declare it to have been a manifestation of the grace of God, which is permanently in evidence in the congregations of Macedonia. He 2 sees this in the fact, that in the midst of the trials of oppression which have come over the congregations of Macedonia, the rich fulness of their joy in Christ has manifested itself in the possession of redemption which has now been made manifest by this proof of their love. For although, as a rule, their exceedingly great poverty, because the persecutions had only made them all the poorer, stood in antagonism to this, yet both of these became exceedingly rich in this, that these persecutions produced a wealth of simplicity in them. For only a simple-minded heart is caused by its own joy to produce joy for others, and teaches men to feel in their poverty the poverty of others. In this sense they have given ac- 3 cording to ability—this the Apostle can assure them of—but rather beyond their ability. But the best thing was, that they did this spontaneously. They had even earnestly begged the Apostle and his companions, considering the permission to contribute to the collec- 4 tion as a favor, to be allowed to take part in the service that was to be rendered to the saints in Jerusalem. According to the knowledge the Apostle had 5 for their financial condition their gifts can have been only very small; but they entirely put themselves first of all at the disposal of the Lord and thereby of him-

VIII, 6-9] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

will of God. (6) Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also. (7) But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in ¹ your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. (8) I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love. (9) For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became

¹ Some ancient authorities read *our love to you*.

self too and of his companions, who made this collection in His service, so that these needed only to determine what these people should give. If the grace of God had accomplished this in Macedonia, he recognized in it the will of God, that he and his companions should encourage Titus, in connection with his visit to Corinth, 6 to bring the collection that had there been begun to a conclusion. In doing this he was only to bring to a completion in their case the gifts of grace that God had shown to the Macedonians. Or, rather, as the Apostle, seemingly correcting himself, says, they are in 7 their manifestations of God's grace also to become rich because they are in all respects already rich in faith, in the ability to teach and to know, in all zeal, and especially in their love for the original congregation in Jerusalem, which love has already been awakened in 8 them by the Apostle and his companions. He does not state this as a command; he only desires by holding up to them the zeal which others show, to test the genuineness of their love, if perchance he can cause the Corinthians to follow the zeal of the Macedonians. 9 For He who commands them to do this is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who, through the manifestation of His love, has given them a perfect model of willingness in self-sacrifice. He gave up the riches of His heavenly glory when He descended into the poverty

II CORINTHIANS

[VIII, 10-14]

poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich. (10) And herein I give *my* judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will. (11) But now complete the doing also; that as *there was* the readiness to will, so *there may be* the completion also out of your ability. (12) For if the readiness is there, *it is* acceptable according as *a man* hath, not according as *he* hath not. (13) For *I say* not *this* that others may be eased *and* ye distressed; (14) but by equality; your abundance *being a supply* at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become *a supply* for your

of His earthly career for their sake, in order by His poverty to secure for them participation in His heavenly glory. On the basis of this example the Apostle advises 10 them to test the genuineness of their love by imitating the Macedonians, as Christ had tested them. For it is wholesome for them, if they do not do this at His command, but do so voluntarily. For they have not only begun the work of collection for Jerusalem earlier than this was done among the Macedonians, where he has just been collecting, but had a year ago expressed their willingness to do this. The object now is only to carry out fully this resolution, as they had declared it to be their intention to do, with the proviso that this should be in accordance with their abilities. For the willingness that is manifest to all is pleasing to God if 11 it is in accordance with their possessions. He does not ask that they do more than they are able. It is not 12 the object of the collection to bring others financial relief by causing themselves embarrassment, but it is only to be in agreement with the principle of equality that their abundance is to accrue to the benefit of those 18 who are in need, so that if circumstances should be changed, the abundance of the latter, too, may some time do them good and in that way the equality be 14

VIII, 15-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

want; that there may be equality : (15) as it is written,
¹ He that *gathered* much had nothing over; and he that
gathered little had no lack.

(16) But thanks be to God, who putteth the same earnest
care for you into the heart of Titus. (17) For he accepted
indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he
went forth unto you of his own accord. (18) And we have
sent together with him the brother whose praise in the ² gospel

¹ Ex. xvi. 18.

² See marginal note on ch. 2. 12.

- 15 again restored. What according to Ex. xvi. 18, had
been miraculously brought about by God in connection
with the collection of manna, namely, that he who had
gathered much did not have more, nor he who had
gathered less had less, the same is to be brought about
in this case through voluntary love, namely, equality.
- 16 The recommendation of those who are sent to Corinth
for the purpose of completing the collection, the Apostle
introduces with a thanksgiving to God for the willing-
ness of Titus to go there. Manifestly the collection
that had been begun there had been very unsatisfac-
tory, as the Apostle constantly gives new reasons why
the Corinthians should contribute liberally. But
God has awakened the same zeal in the heart of Titus
to urge them on to this, and in this way to give to them
also the manifestations of God's grace, on account of
which he had rejoiced so much in the case of the Mace-
- 17 donians. He had indeed gladly accepted the directions
which the Apostle gave him, because he rejoiced that
the Apostle desired him to go; but at heart he was all
too zealous to wait first for such instructions, so that as
a matter of fact he went to Corinth of his own accord.
- 18 But Paul and his associates have sent with him another
brother, concerning whom the Apostle presupposes, that
the praise of his participation in the proclamation of the
gospel, and which has gone through all the congregations,
must have also come to them. He belongs to the dep-

II CORINTHIANS

[VIII, 19-22]

is spread through all the churches; (19) and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in *the matter of* this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and *to show* our readiness: (20) avoiding this, that any man should blame us in *the matter of* this bounty which is ministered by us: (21) for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. (22) And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many

uties who have been selected by the congregations to 19 accompany the Apostle on his journey to Jerusalem. Accordingly, then, after the rich returns of the collection in Macedonia, the Apostle had definitely decided (cf. 1. Cor. xvi. 3) to deliver the sum collected personally in conjunction with representatives of the congregations who had contributed. That such were selected indicated that this collection was the fruit of a warm fraternal love for the original congregation, and in this way would redound to the glory of the Lord Himself, who had aroused this love in the hearts of the Gentile congregations. But this was also to make the Apostle 20 and his companions all the more willing to raise this collection, because these deputies would see whether the rich abundance of this collection, as he confidently presupposes to be the case, would be used only for this purpose, and in this way would prevent any false slanders being circulated about the Apostle. For he 21 is compelled to make provisions that all he does is not only laudable in the sight of God, but also in the sight of man. How much reason he had for this, as the Christ-pupils were looking for occasions at all hands to cast suspicions on him, the present letter will abundantly show. Still another brother whom Paul has sent, 22 he had already tested on many occasions, manifestly also in connection with this work of collection, and he

things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which *he hath* in you. (23) Whether *any inquire* about Titus, *he is* my partner and *my* fellow-worker to you-ward; or our brethren, *they are* the ¹messengers of the churches, *they are* the glory of Christ. (24) ²Show ye therefore unto them in the face of the churches the proof of your love, and of our glorying on your behalf.

IX For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: (2) for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Mace-

¹ Gr. *apostles*.

² Or, *show ye therefore in the face . . . on your behalf unto them*.

finds him now all the more zealous for this, but solely on account of the great confidence which he placed in
 23 the Corinthians. What Paul desires finally to say in commending them applies to Titus, because he was a companion closely connected with him and was a fellow-laborer in the Corinthian congregation, in which he had been active during his first mission there. This applies also to the two companions who stood in such fraternal relations to the Apostle, and as deputies of the congregation served for the honor of Christ, because these had been worthy to be occupants of such honorable positions in the congregation. For the Corin-
 24 thians are to remember that if in the presence of these three they furnished a proof of their affection for the original congregation, as also a proof that Paul and his associates had not without reason boasted of their Corinthian congregation to these representatives, this proof will at the same time be made in the presence of the congregations, who had selected these men to be their deputies.

1 The Apostle can speak of this proof of their love for the original congregation, because it was entirely superfluous for him to write anything more of the service to the saints that was intended by this collection, as he is
 2 sure of their willingness in this regard. For he is con-

II CORINTHIANS

[IX, 3-6]

donia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past ; and ¹your zeal hath stirred up ²very many of them. (3) But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect ; that, even as I said, ye may be prepared : (4) lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence. (5) I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your aforepromised ³bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of ⁴extortion.

¹ Or, *emulation of you.*
² Gr. *blessing.*

³ Gr. *the more part.*
⁴ Or, *covetousness.*

stantly praising their willingness side most strongly to the Macedonians, so that by the very fact that he told them of the willingness of Achaia to make a collection, of which they had already assured him a year ago, he had aroused the most of these to desire to take a part in the collection, even if many of them did not need this encouragement. The sending of the three brethren was **3** to serve the purpose of proving that the praise he had given to the Corinthians was not without a good foundation in the matter of the collection, if, as he could presuppose on the basis of these declarations and as he had stated everywhere, they would not really be willing to furnish the collection. For if, perchance, Macedonians should afterwards come to Corinth and not find this to be a fact, then he would be put to shame by his confidence in them. He will not say they themselves would be put to shame, although this in reality would be the case, if they so little justified the confidence of him and his associates. For this reason he considered **5** it necessary to admonish these three men, that they should go first and do everything that was still lacking for the completion of the collection that had been begun. He declares this to be a blessing, which proceeds from the givers to those who receive, and which **4**

(6) But this *I say*, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that ¹soweth bountifully shall reap also ¹bountifully. (7) *Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not* ²*grudgingly, or of necessity: for*

¹ Gr. *with blessings*. Comp. ver. 5.

² Gr. *of sorrow*.

had been promised to them long ago, as he had declared above. But then this blessing must also be ready, as a divine blessing usually is, to give richly, and not meagerly, as this is generally done by avarice, if it is compelled to give at all.

The Apostle introduces his final recommendation of the collection, by continuing what he has just said of rich 6 or meager gifts. For, in reference to these different ways of giving, he reminds them of the fact that the method of divine retribution will be in harmony with it, the character of which he makes plain by representing it to be the harvest of what is sown. If the sowing was done in such a way that the seed was scattered sparingly, then only a meager harvest could be expected. As the way of retribution is here represented figuratively in agreement with the way of giving, thus, too, the way of giving is represented in agreement with the way of retribution. For, because rich giving is followed by a recompense in the shape of rich blessings, thus the former is represented as a sowing in anticipation of a rich blessing. Of course this must be in harmony with that which we have determined in our hearts to do in this matter, and must not proceed from sorrow because we must give up what we give away, or only because external compulsion has induced the giver to do this. The Apostle bases this on the well-known words of Prov. xxii. 8, 7 namely, that God loves a cheerful giver. But if a person raises the objection that he does not at all times have the means to give richly, it is only necessary to

II CORINTHIANS

[IX, 8-11]

God loveth a cheerful giver. (8) And God is able to make all grace abound unto you ; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work : (9) as it is written,

¹ He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor ;
His righteousness abideth for ever.

(10) And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness : (11) ye being enriched in everything unto all ²liberality, which worketh through us

¹ Ps. cxii. 9.

² Gr. *singleness*. Comp. ch. 8. 2.

apply to God, who certainly will be able to give us in 8 such abundance all the gifts of grace necessary for this purpose, so that in every case that may make demands on us, we shall at all times be in a condition to do every good work. The Apostle finds, in Ps. cxii. 9, 9 the promise expressly stated, that to him who gives his own to the poor richly there never will be a lack of means to serve his God by good deeds. As God not 10 only gives the sower the seed that he sows, but also the bread to eat which grows out of the seed, in this way He will not only give them the means for doing good abundantly, but will also cause to grow out of this all new evidences of their dispositions that are well pleasing to Him, so that in their case, too, the doing of good continues. 11 The Apostle explains this more fully by the fact that they are in every matter rich, i. e. that they will never lack the means for every manifestation of that simplicity which is always ready to give, because love urges men on, and the needs of the brethren call for this, without first asking if we also have what we need to give. For this simplicity, as the Apostle and his companions furnish it with the opportunity to prove itself, brings about thanksgiving to God, who has not permitted them to lack for means, when it concerned His honor. But such a proof is found in the service

thanksgiving to God. (12) For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; (13) seeing that through the proving of *you* by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the ¹gospel of Christ, and for the ²liberality of *your* contribution unto them and unto all; (14) while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. (15) Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 2. 12.

² Gr. *singleness*.

12 which is being rendered by this collection for the public welfare of the Christian congregation. For this not only supplies the needs of the saints, by giving them what they yet require, but it becomes abundantly rich through the many thanksgivings unto God of those who receive, because He has worked in the hearts of the Christians from among the Gentiles such concern for
 18 the welfare of the primitive congregation. Because the Apostle, through the collection, has proved as true the service that he had promised in Gal. ii. 20, they will praise God in that He has worked in the Corinthians the obedience, which their confession of the gospel concerning Christ (which demands love for the confessors of the same gospel) demands of them, and also the simplicity in which this loving sympathy for them, as for all confessors of the gospel, shows itself. The recipients of the gifts will then also, on their part, and amid prayers for the readers, long for them on account of the abounding grace which God has made
 14 active in them. The Apostle, too, on his part, closes with thanksgiving to God for the exceedingly great gift which He has given us in Christ and in His redemptive work, because it is this gift which in the Corinthians has now also worked such willingness to help, that in the original congregation the praise of God is called forth.

II CORINTHIANS

[X, 1-2]

X Now I Paul myself entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage toward you : (2) yea, I beseech you, that I may not when present show courage with the confidence wherewith I count to be bold against some, who count of us as if we walked according to

While Paul, in that which he wrote in the first and in the second part of this letter, included his companions, the third part contains a discussion of his purely personal relations to the Christ pupils in Corinth. For this reason he expressly emphasizes the fact that 1 what he here states pertains to himself personally, and he even mentions himself by name. He permits himself to be guided alone by the example of Christ, so that he uses only His gentleness, which is not aroused to anger by the weaknesses and the failings of others, and only His mildness and His justice, which do not insist upon their rights by stringent demands and punishments as a means to his admonitions. Of course this is interpreted as personal cowardice by his enemies. Among you, they say, he is indeed humble and hesitating, but when absent bold and arrogant towards you. Probably this slander had been occasioned by the fact, that during his last short stay in Corinth he had taken a mild stand again, but subsequently, being provoked by the conduct of the congregation, he had been compelled to address them in a sharper tone in his letters, both the one that was lost and in the first Epistle. But Paul begs of God that he, when he again comes to 2 Corinth, will not need to show the same severity. This can take place only if God gives success to the main thing that he has here in this letter again emphasized, and to which he repeatedly exhorts in the following. That he takes a firm stand because of the confidence that was

the flesh. (3) For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (4) (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds) ; (5) casting down ¹imaginations, and

¹ Or, *reasonings*. Rom. 2. 15.

based on the consciousness of his office, he purposes to show through the way in which he now intends with all boldness to antagonize certain persons who have slandered him in the congregation. These slanders they must here and there have listened to, and the Apostle thought it necessary energetically to oppose these slanderers. For they thought, as he says, with a play on words, that he and his companions still walked in a fleshly way, since only the purely human and natural motives of human fear, on the one hand, and haughtiness on the other, could move him to such conduct as the opponents charge him with.

8 He would not deny that they walked in the flesh, and accordingly are yet exposed to the temptations that come from the flesh; but he denies, that in this contest, which they by virtue of their office carry on against the sins in the congregation and against the enemies of the truth, as it were, in the war counsel of God, they suffer themselves to be led by carnal motives.

4 For the weapons which he employs in this war do not originate in the human and natural man, in which case they would be weak and insufficient. In reality, they were mighty enough to tear down in the service of God the bulwarks that rise up against Him, i. e., to conquer his opponents who antagonize the cause of God which he represents. But he who has such weapons for battle at his command, need not be determined in his way of fighting by human and natural

5 motives. What Paul understands by these bulwarks, he himself explains by describing them as the thoughts

II CORINTHIANS

[X, 6-7]

every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; (6) and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full. (7) ¹ Ye look at the things that are before your face. If any man trusteth in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again with

¹ Or, *Do ye look . . . face ?*

of men and as that pride which rises up against the knowledge of God which he proclaims, whereby the opponents wish to drive the Corinthians away from the truth and gain them for their own heresies. And what he understands by tearing down their bulwarks and their haughty buildings, he explains by stating that he will take all their thoughts and purposes captive by obedience to Christ, i. e. will cause that they be determined only by Christ, in whom alone God is perfectly known, and not by those haughty human thoughts in the activities of their minds. He purposely makes a distinction between the congregation and the deceivers who have forced their way into it. 6 For if he hopes through this letter, in so far as they have been influenced by his opponents, to win the former, back again to a perfect obedience, then he, with his associates, as soon as this has taken place, are ready to impend over the latter, on account of their disobedience and their resistance to the truth, the punishment that they deserve, namely, to expel them from the congregation, which, of course, can take place only with the full consent of the congregation. The Apostle demands of the congregation to look at the facts as they are plainly revealed. If these slanderers base their right to exalt themselves above him and his associates 7 and to judge them, on the fact that they are conscious of being Christ's pupils, this fact, on the other hand, must enable them to judge, on their part, that he and his associates are Christ's scholars as well as they, be-

himself, that, even as he is Christ's, so also are we. (8) For though I should glory somewhat abundantly concerning our authority (which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down), I shall not be put to shame: (9) that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by my letters. (10) For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account. (11) Let such a one reckon this, that, what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *are we* also indeed when we are present. (12) For we are not bold ¹ to number or compare

¹ Gr. *to judge ourselves among, or to judge ourselves with.*

cause to the knowledge of all they recognize Christ
8 alone as their Lord and Master. Indeed, if he has perhaps boasted in reference to himself of something going far beyond this, as he did also above of the power overcoming his opponents, he will not be put to shame in this matter. For he has in mind thereby only the authority which Christ has given him and his associates, although naturally only for the purposes of edifying, not of destroying the congregation. Hence he exhorts them to overcome those who would de-
9 stroy the congregation. But in this respect God will give him victory, so that it may not seem as though he intended merely to cause terror through the letters in
10 which he had written such threats. For in this case the slander that his letters appear weighty and strongly expressed, but that his personal presence was weak and his address did not command respect, would be well founded. In view of such a confirmation of his threats, everybody who thinks he has a right to pass judgment on him must know that he and those like him are, when present, exactly the same as they are in their letters when absent.

12 What the Apostle has said in the preceding could again be interpreted as the self-laudation of which he had long since been accused (iii. 1). For this reason

II CORINTHIANS

[X, 13-15]

ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves: but they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding. (13) But we will not glory beyond *our* measure, but according to the measure of the ¹ province which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even unto you. (14) For we stretch not ourselves overmuch, as though we reached not unto you: for we ² came even as far as unto you in the ³ gospel of Christ: (15) not glorying beyond *our* measure, *that is*, in other men's labors; but having hope that, as your faith groweth, we shall be magnified in you according to our ¹ pro-

¹ Or, *limit*. Gr. *measuring-rod*.

² Or, *were the first to come*.

³ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 2. 12.

he now discusses in detail his way of judging himself. With cutting irony he declares it to be a bold undertaking to place himself in the same rank, or even to compare himself with some of those who, in truth, only praise themselves. Such are his opponents, who neither can be measured by a fixed standard of ability nor be compared in point of service with others, but who always measure themselves according to their own standards and compare themselves with themselves, so that they do not really understand how to judge themselves. He and his companions, on the contrary, will 13 not praise themselves in an unmeasured degree, but only with that measure which God has given them as a gauge of the success that He has granted them. But this success is connected with his present readers because God, together with other successes, had given to them the founding of the Corinthian congregation as an object of their justifiable boasting. The Apostle can 14 ask, if they have really extended their boasting beyond the just measure, as though they had not by their activity come up to the level of their readers. For it is certainly a fact that in the proclamation of the 15 gospel among the Corinthians, they accordingly do not, like their opponents, praise themselves beyond meas-

vince unto *further* abundance, (16) so as to ¹preach the gospel even unto the parts beyond you, *and* not to glory in another's ²province in regard of things ready to our hand. (17) ³But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (18) For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

XI Would that ye could bear with me in a little foolish-

¹ Gr. *bring good tidings.* Comp. Mt 11. 5.
² Or, *limit.* Gr. *measuring-rod.* ³ Jer. ix. 24.

ure. These opponents had broken into a congregation that had already been founded, and now have, as the result of their activity, the credit of all that others have accomplished with great labor. Paul hopes, on the other hand, with his associates, to travel still farther; but not before the faith of the Corinthians has grown in accordance with the measure that has been given them. Accordingly, when, through the success that God has given them at this place, their work has grown among the readers, and become so great that it is perfectly completed, then they can proclaim the gospel in
16 the countries that lie beyond Corinth. But in this case they will not measure themselves by the measure which has been given to others in their successes, and hence will not boast in reference to that which has been already accomplished by the labor of others. But
17 rather it remains true, what has been stated in Jer. ix. 23, as the only correct way of praising, namely, that they boast in reliance upon God, i. e. according to the
18 success that He has given. For he is not approved who lauds himself, but only he whom the Lord commends through the successes that He gives them.

1 For this reason nobody should dare commend himself, as the Apostle really had done in the preceding. This always results in self-glorification, and all self-glorification is folly. For either it is empty and untrue, or it is based on gifts and successes which

II CORINTHIANS

[XI, 2-3]

ness: ¹but indeed ye do bear with me. (2) For I am jealous over you with ²a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ. (3) But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your ³minds should be corrupted from

¹ Or, *nay indeed bear with me.*

² Gr. *a jealousy of God.*

³ Gr. *thoughts.* See ch. 8. 14.

God gives, and in this case nobody should laud himself. Yet, notwithstanding this, his opponents have compelled the Apostle to do this, as they had succeeded in making some impression on the congregation through their self-glorification and their slanders of the Apostle. For this reason, he ironically expresses the wish that they should patiently bear with him in the little foolishness that lies in his self-praise. It is seemingly asking too much; but they do endure him as a matter of fact, as the reception of his first letter showed, concerning which his opponents always declared that it was overflowing with such self commendation. For the Corinthians had perceived quite clearly what in that case had compelled him to write those words, which would be interpreted in this way. It was his zeal for them, in which they would readily 2 detect the fact that it was a zeal wrought by God. For in its establishment he here, as one seeking a bride for a friend, betrothed the congregation to a Man, to whom it is solely and alone to belong, and his only duty is to see to it that he, when at the return of the Lord the full union with Him is effected, can place it before Christ as a pure virgin, who has preserved unchanged her fidelity to Him. But he has reasons to fear, as was 3 once the case with Eve in Paradise (Gen. iii. 13), that the congregation will be deceived by withdrawing their minds and thoughts from the simplicity which seeks salvation in Christ alone, and from the virgin purity which gives the entire heart to Christ alone. For it is

the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. (4) For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or *if* ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different ¹ gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. Comp. ch. 2. 12.

already a fact, that they do not reject these Christ pupils, but that these are suffered to be among them, and
 4 to a certain degree they have even listened to these. In these heresies another than himself had come and had declared to them another Jesus, namely, that one who had in His life upon earth faithfully kept the law and had demanded its fulfilment, whereas he, the Apostle, had preached to them the crucified and exalted Christ, who was the end of the law. The Spirit, that they were to receive from the Christ pupils, was surely different from the one whom they had received in baptism, because the former was intended to drive them into the fulfilment of the law, while the latter worked in them the divine will without the fulfilment of the law. The gospel which these men preached was surely different from that which they had once accepted; for the latter declared to them the free grace of God, which offered them perfect redemption in Christ alone, whereas the former made the fulfilment of the promises dependent on conversion to Judaism and on the fulfilment of the law. If they suffered such people among them without protest, then he had reasons to fear that they would be deceived. But then he has also a right to expect that they would show him the same indulgence. For he judges, and every impartial man will agree with him, that he is in no respect inferior to these men. These had indeed been direct pupils of Jesus, and therefore deport themselves as highly exalted above the Apostle. Even if he must concede that, in comparison with these, who manage to make an impression with their

II CORINTHIANS

[XI, 6-8]

well to bear with *him*. (5) For I reckon that I am not a whit behind ¹the very chiefest apostles. (6) But though *I* be rude in speech, yet *am I* not in knowledge; ²nay, in every way have we made *this* manifest unto you in all things.

(7) Or did I commit sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I ³preached to you the gospel of God for nought?

(8) I robbed other churches, taking wages of *them* that I

¹ Or, those preëminent apostles.

² Or, nay, in everything we have made it manifest among all men to you-ward.

³ Gr. brought good tidings. See ch. 16.

wordy talk he is a mere tyro in speech, he certainly is 5 not such in knowledge, for, as he and his companions 6 have declared to all among whom they have preached, they possess in all things, this knowledge which alone shows the way to redemption, and have also imparted it to the Corinthians.

In one particular point the Apostle first sets up in contrast to their bold self-assertion, his own unassuming demeanor, which the opponents had attributed to false motives. Evidently they had interpreted his action in declining to receive any support from the congregation to mean that he did not dare to put himself on the same level with the true preachers of the gospel, who, like the Christ pupils, had insisted upon such support. But was it wrong for him, to put himself into an 7 abasing position, in which he was compelled by hard work to earn his daily bread at his trade, in order to elevate them through the blessing which his activity brought to them? It certainly could not have been a sin, to impart to others without compensation such a gift of God as the gospel. With an intentionally strong 8 expression, the Apostle says, that he had robbed other congregations, by permitting them to pay him, not for services that he had rendered them, but for those which he had rendered to the Corinthians (cf. e. g. Phil. iv. 15). But while he labored among the latter he supported himself by his trade, and although he often

might minister unto you ; (9) and when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man ; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want ; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep *myself*. (10) As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia. (11) Wherefore ? because I love you not ? God knoweth. (12) But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off ¹occasion from them that desire an

¹ Gr. *the occasion of them*.

9 enough had suffered want, he never troubled others, because the brethren Silvanus and Timothy (cf. Acts xviii. 5.) when they came from Macedonia, brought from Beroëa and Thessalonica so much that it amply made up what he lacked. As in consequence of this he has caused the Corinthians no trouble by directly or indirectly accepting support from them, he intends in future to adhere to this principle. He appeals to
10 the uprightness which is in him through his life communion with Christ. Nothing should prevent his boasting in the regions of Achaia, the capital of which Corinth was, by becoming unfaithful to this rule. He asks whether this shows a lack of that love, which receives in the same confidence with which it gives, and appeals to God, who must know, that it was nothing
11 but love for them which impelled him to do this. But he has another special reason for adhering to this rule. His opponents have indeed demanded, in recognition of their authority as teachers, that they be
12 supported by the congregation (cf. 1. Cor. ix. 12) ; but they certainly must wish in this matter to be able to appeal to him, or at any rate, not be surpassed by him in unselfishness. For this reason they tried by representing this unselfishness as a distrust of his right or as a lack of love to induce him to give up his practice. But the occasion that they sought in demand-

II CORINTHIANS

[XI, 13-17]

occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. (13) For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. (14) And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. (15) It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

(16) I say again, Let no man think me foolish; but if *ye do*, yet as foolish receive me, that I also may glory a little. (17) That

ing the support of the congregation, of which they boasted as their right as teachers, by an appeal to him, he once for all deprives them of, by declaring that he would never do this. Such people as they have no 18 Apostolic rights at all, because they only falsely put forth the claim of being Apostles. They are not even workers in the field of God, because while they claim to be only working, they are really only destroying 14 it. They only assume the mark of Apostles of Christ, as the Devil, in order to deceive men, sometimes assumes the marks of an angel from the regions of heavenly light. With their doctrine of the law they pretend to be the servants of righteousness, and yet they are Satan's 15 servants, because they fight against the true gospel of righteousness, which is given to us in Christ alone by grace. But their end will be in accordance with their actions.

In view of the dangers threatening him from these deceivers the Apostle finds himself compelled to make a comparison between himself and his opponents, which in reality he considers foolish. He must again 16 state, what is clear already from all that has preceded, that they should not consider him a fool who does not see this. If they do so consider him, then they may give ear to him as a fool, so that he too can boast a little as his opponents do. What he says in connection 17

which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of glorying. (18) Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. (19) For ye bear with the foolish gladly, being wise *yourselves*. (20) For ye bear with a man, if he bringeth you into bondage, if he devoureth you, if he taketh you *captive*, if he exalteth himself, if he smiteth you on the face. (21) I speak by way of disparage-

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- 18 with such boasting, is of course not spoken according to the will and the mind of the Lord, but only as a person speaks in foolishness. But as it is the case that many are boasting in accordance with that which belongs to the natural man, that is, of their own virtues instead of those which the Lord has given, he as a matter of necessity must do the same, in order not to stand behind these in the eyes of the Corinthians. Through the influence which the opponents have gained among these, they show that they like to
- 19 endure fools, because they are wise. This is, of course, bitter irony; for it is under certain circumstances wise to have patience with fools, but not, as was the case with them, to do this from false complaisance. This appears to be their case from the fact, that they accept
- 20 anything from his opponents. They are enslaved by the authority claimed by these false teachers; they are impoverished, as they give these men their support; they are captured as animals in the hunt or as fishes in the net, by the arts by which their opponents seek to win them; they endure the haughty arrogance of these men and permit themselves to be publicly abused by
- 21 their impudence. It sounds like a disgrace for himself and his companions, when he states this, because they have never ventured to do to the Corinthians what these have suffered their opponents to do, as though the Apostle were too weak to do this. But on

II CORINTHIANS

[XI, 22-25]

ment, as though we had been weak. Yet whereinsoever any is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am bold also. (22) Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. (23) Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside myself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. (24) Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. (25) Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day

the same basis on which a man may venture what they venture, he could also do this. It is indeed spoken in foolishness, because the virtues on the basis of which this bold stand is taken, are in his eyes no virtues at all and least of all justify such claims. But he must yet in the end ask if they really have any virtues that make them superior to him. In the first place, as far 22 as their nationality is concerned and their membership in the chosen people, (the people of the promise, on account of which they are so proud), he undeniably stands on an equality with them. The question accordingly can only be, who has a better right to call himself the servant of Christ? The Apostle adds the 23 thought, that in reality it is folly on his part to ask this, as it is only by an act of grace that Christ takes a person into His service, and this does not give anybody the right to boast of his own virtues. But that he is a servant of Christ and not they, is seen by the strenuous labors, sufferings and dangers which he has endured much more abundantly than they. He reminds his readers of the fact that he had endured the punishments of the synagogue five times, on which occasion 24 one stripe was each time omitted, in order not to go 25 beyond the number determined by Deut. xxv. 3; and that he had three times been scourged by the Romans (cf. e. g. Acts xvi. 22-25); that he had once been stoned,

have I been in the deep ; (26) *in* journeyings often, *in* perils of rivers, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils from *my* ¹ countrymen, *in* perils from the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren (27) *in* labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. (28) ² Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. (29) Who is weak, and I

¹ Gr. race. Comp. Acts 7. 19.
Or, besides the things that come out of course.

² Or, Besides the things which I omit.

Acts xiv. 19 ; had suffered shipwreck three times, on one of which occasions, probably because he had been cast about on a wreck, he had for twenty-four hours sunken again and again into the waves of the sea. Then he continues in his description of the things through which
26 he had shown himself to be the servant of Christ, his frequent and exhausting journeys on foot, in which he was often exposed to danger on account of overflowing streams and often on account of attacks by robbers, while his life was often threatened by his own countrymen as well as by the heathen, in city and country (especially in desert places), on sea and on land, and
27 even among false brethren. In order to be able to serve Christ in the gospel, he has by incessant toil earned his daily bread, in many watchings by night in hunger and in thirst ; or, if it was not as bad as this, by frequent fastings which he had imposed upon himself ; in coldness, which would be doubly felt on account of
28 his sparse clothing. Not to be counted among these
29 things are the regular sufferings that form a daily part of his work ; the daily pressure upon him ; the care for all the congregations, also for those who were not founded by himself, to which fact the epistles to the Romans and to the Colossians testify. This care of his extends even to the individual members of the congregation. If he hears of a person who is being

II CORINTHIANS

[XI, 30-32]

am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not? (30)
If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern
my weakness. (31) ¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus,
he who is blessed ²for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. (32)
In Damascus the ³governor under Arctas the king guarded the

¹ Or, *God and the Father*. See Rom. 15. 6.

² Gr. *unto the ages*.

³ Gr. *ethnarch*.

tempted by failure of faith and by scruples and doubts,
he sympathizes with him in these weaknesses as though
they were his own. If he hears of one who is being
tempted by another to sin and unbelief, he is filled with
indignation and grief.

Over against this self-praise on account of his sacri- 30
fices and services, which had been forced from him only
by his opponents, the Apostle sets forth what the real
subject of his glorying is. In this lies his real pre-emi-
nence, that in consequence of his bodily and mental
weakness, the labors and sufferings and endurances of
his work were all the more arduous. This, however,
not only makes impossible all vain self-praise, but
magnifies the grace of God, which helps him on all
occasions. All the more evident would be the opera-
tion of this grace than if a strong nature made it less
necessary for him to depend upon it. For this he can
appeal to the Searcher of hearts, who alone knows how
heavy is the burden which he must bear in his weak-
ness. But he is now in a condition to give examples of 31
this from the time immediately following his conver-
sion, when, humanly speaking, it would be regarded as
possible that what he had just experienced would give
him strength and power to defy all danger. He ac-
cordingly emphasizes strongly the fact that this experi- 32
ence, which he intends to narrate and which we know
from Acts ix. 24, he went through in the immediate
neighborhood of the place where the Lord had appeared
to him on the way to Damascus. In the same way he

city of the Damascenes in order to take me : (83) and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands.

XII ¹I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. (2) I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. (8) And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), (4) how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words,

¹ Some ancient authorities read *Now to glory is not expedient, but I will come, &c.*

83 emphasizes, by a full description of all the details, the disgraceful nature of his secret flight, through which he escaped pursuit, instead of boldly meeting the danger.

- 1 He repeats, that the self-praise that had been forced from him is indeed of no value, and could easily lead to overestimation of self, but that he for this very reason intends to speak of his higher spiritual experiences in order to show by these how little these give him a cause for self-exaltation. For these do not consist in any sacrifices or services, on account of which he could boast, but exclusively in visions and in revelations, 2 which the Lord had given him. If he mentions one of 8 these, which he can never forget, which even to-day, 4 after fourteen years, still stands vividly before his eyes, he does this, because he can thus show how little personal virtues have made him worthy of this vision. He gives his narrative, as though speaking of another person, of whom nothing more was to be said than that he stood in the communion of life with Christ, and of which he repeatedly says that he does not even know, whether he was in the body or out of the body. He only knows that this man, of whom he is speaking, had been entirely removed from an earthly presence with

II CORINTHIANS

[XII, 5-8]

which it is not lawful for a man to utter. (5) On behalf of such a one will I glory : but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in *my* weaknesses. (6) For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish ; for I shall speak the truth : but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or heareth from me. (7) And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the ¹revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a ²thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. (8) Concerning this thing I besought the

¹ Some ancient authorities read *revelations—wherefore, that, &c.*

² Or, *stake.*

its natural consciousness and had been exalted to the highest heaven, where the place of the blessed is to be found, and there heard inexpressible words, which he was not permitted to repeat, even if he could. He must indeed boast that this man had gone through wonderful 5 experiences, but this does not entitle him to boast of his human importance, excepting perchance so far as this makes clear how little, on account of the weaknesses that are inherent in him, he is in himself capable or worthy of experiencing such great grace. He could perhaps boast of that experience of grace, if he desired, without being 6 a fool, who claims for himself that which is contrary to facts. He, on his part, would only be telling the truth. But he intentionally abstains from this, in order not to cause anybody to pass upon him a judgment, which is not warranted by what the other can himself see to be true or which he can hear from his own lips, not even on account of the phenomenally great revelation, of which he says that he has been deemed worthy. But for this very purpose, as the Apostle repeats, that 7 he may not exalt himself, there has been given to him a constantly recurring, troublesome bodily ailment, in which an angel of Satan was beating him with fists. Naturally, this angel was not permitted to do him any harm without the will of the Lord. But in reply to his 8

Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. (9) And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee : for *my* power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ ¹ may rest upon me. (10) Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong.

(11) I am become foolish : ye compelled me ; for I ought to have been commended of you : for in nothing was I behind

¹ Or, *cover me*. Gr. *spread a tabernacle over me*. See Rev. 7. 15.

- 9 repeated petitions, that he might be delivered from this trouble, he had once for all been informed, that he should be contented with the grace of the Lord, which manifests itself especially in human weakness. For when all human power fails, then grace can operate most, and through its power overcome all human weakness, and, notwithstanding the latter, accomplish the greatest results. For this purpose Paul prefers to glory, not of his virtues, but rather of his weakness, because the fact that he completely feels this weakness makes him willing to receive the permanent indwelling of the power of Christ, which then this can grow in his heart with-
- 10 out restraint. For this reason the painful sufferings he experiences, such as his many bodily ailments, insulting abuses, necessities, persecutions, oppressions, are all welcome to him, for Christ's sake, because these give the richest opportunities for the power of His grace. Just when he is weak, the activity of this grace is developed most highly, whereas every feeling of one's own power excludes this work of His grace.
- 11 The Apostle concludes his discussion concerning his adversaries with an address to the congregation. With great reluctance he decided to do as he had done in the preceding discussion, although he regarded it as absolute folly, i. e. he has praised himself above his adversaries, even though he in the end says this was

II CORINTHIANS

[XII, 12-18]

¹the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. (12) Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all ²patience, by signs and wonders and ³mighty works. (13) For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except *it be* that I myself was not a burden to you? forgive me this wrong.

¹ Or, *those preëminent apostles.*
² Or, *steadfastness.* ³ Gr. *powers.*

on account of his weakness. The Corinthians have forced him to this. For if they, as they should have done, had commended him, rather than his opponents, by putting his superiority to them in the proper light, he would not then have been compelled to enumerate these virtues. But they have suffered themselves to be silenced by these Christ pupils, when these lauded themselves on account of their virtues, and for this there certainly was no reason. For in truth he has proved himself inferior to these arrogant men in nothing, even if in their eyes he is nothing. The signs that prove him to be the real Apostle have been 12 worked before their eyes, so that they all could see this, although, of course, this had not been done through himself, but through Him who has given him this success in Corinth. The Apostle has contributed nothing to this, except that amid many troublous painful circumstances, he has patiently labored on; but Christ, through signs and wonders and powerful deeds, which He permitted him to perform, has produced these results. For what else was yet needed of these signs of his Apostolic dignity, unless, perchance, this, that he 13 did not put forth the claim to which these entitled him? This question the Apostle puts as follows: wherein had they been at a disadvantage with regard to the other congregations, although none of his congregations had ever complained of being neglected in this way, and although such neglect could certainly not

XII, 14-16] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(14) Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you ; and I will not be a burden to you ; for I seek not yours, but you : for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. (15) And I will most gladly spend and be ¹spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less? (16) But be it so, I did not myself

¹ Gr. *spent out*.

be found in this, that he has not troubled them with the demand for his support. This would be the only thing in which they could think that they had been at a disadvantage in comparison with the other congregations ; and if this was the case he is perfectly willing to
14 ask for their pardon for it. The visit to them, for which he is now preparing, is already the third, and on this occasion too he does not intend to become a burden to them. This shows plainly that he sees nothing wrong in this, for otherwise he would now change his methods. But this he does not do, because he is not coming in order to gain any profits from them, but only because he longs for them, as he is entitled to do, because of his paternal relations to them. For the children are not in duty bound to gather treasures for their parents ; but, rather, the opposite is the case. And if he seeks for them treasures, he does it in order to benefit them.
15 Indeed, he would like to do much more than the average father. He would not only like to put forth efforts to bring them something, but would like to sacrifice himself entirely for them, i. e. use himself up in the service of their souls. For if it be his experience, that, the more he loves them, as he shows by the fact that he refrains from asking for any support on the part of the congregation, the less he is loved, because they ascribe this to him as indifference ; then indeed nothing is left for him but to overcome their cold hearts by a supreme
16 sacrifice of love. They must allow that he has not been a burden to them ; but the opponents had per-

II CORINTHIANS

[XII, 17-19]

burden you ; but, being crafty, I caught you with guile. (17) Did I take advantage of you by any one of them whom I have sent unto you ? (18) I exhorted Titus, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you ? walked we not ¹ in the same Spirit ? *walked we* not in the same steps ?

(19) ² Ye think all this time that we are excusing ourselves unto you. In the sight of God, speak we in Christ. But all

¹ Or, *by the same Spirit.*

² Or, *think ye . . . you ?*

suaded them to believe, that he was shrewd enough in a tricky way to use them indirectly for his advantage. The Apostle can place over against this the simple fact 17 that he has not attempted in any way to gain a personal advantage through any person whom he may have sent to them. It is true that when he for the first time sent 18 Titus he had urged him strongly to go to them, as though he had a purely personal interest in his journey to Corinth. We are first informed at this place that he had at that time sent another brother with him. Here it becomes perfectly clear that Timothy could not have reached Corinth ; for in this case Paul would not have been compelled to mention him here also. But he asks, only with reference to Titus, if he had in any way taken advantage of them. For he and his companions could have done this only in the name and for the personal benefit of the Apostle. But Paul can confidently call upon them as witnesses of the fact, that in the same spirit of unselfishness as he himself had shown, Titus had worked among them and had walked in his footsteps. The Apostle closes with the statement that 19 already, that is, since he has begun to refute the objections of his opponents and expose the groundlessness of their self-exaltation, they had thought, that he wanted to defend himself and his associates against their charges. But he cannot acknowledge them as his judges, because God, before whose countenance he speaks what he says, is alone his Judge ; and Christ also

things, beloved, are for your edifying. (20) For I fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as ye would not ; lest by any means *there should be* strife, jealousy, wraths, factions,

in the communion of life with whom he says what He tells him to speak, raises him above all human judgment. Over against them, all his speaking has only the purpose of advancing the edification of the congregation, so as not to permit the normal development of their spiritual life to be endangered by his opponents.

The activity of the Christ pupils in Corinth had been dangerous for this reason, that one more party was added to those which already existed, and which the first letter so sharply rebuked ; and this dissension was between those who to a certain degree had permitted themselves to be misled by the opponents of the Apostles, and those who had remained faithful to Paul. In all events his authority had thereby been considerably weakened in the congregation, and yet he needed this authority to its fullest extent, in order to root out the remnants of the old sins and abuses in the congregation, which he had denounced in his first letter. For this reason he ends his address to the congregation by

20 warning those sinners who had not yet repented. For, indeed, he must fear that, in consequence of the agitation of his adversaries, when he comes to the congregation things will not be as he would have desired, nor will he be found by them to be as they would wish him to be viz : a loving father, but a stern judge. For he fears that among them will yet be found the old sins of party spirit, and these he now enumerates. There still prevail among them strife and contention, anger and jealousies, slander and insinuations, pride and disorder of all kinds. For this reason he fears that God

II CORINTHIANS

[XIII, 1-2]

backbitings, whisperings, swellings, ¹ tumults; (21) lest again when I come my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they committed.

XIII This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established. (2) I have said ² beforehand, and I do say ² before-

¹ Or, *disorders*.

² Or, *plainly*. Comp. 1 Thess. 8. 4.

will again humiliate him when he comes, as He did at his second visit, when the experiences he then made humiliated him so greatly. He fears that he will be 21 compelled to mourn on account of many of the sinners of that time, because they have not yet heartily repented on account of the uncleanness, the fornication, and other excesses that prevail in the midst of them. He is now coming for a third time, and then, as he had 1 threatened them no doubt on his second visit, a regular judicial investigation is to be instituted against those who are impenitent. In dealing with him, then, they will find his strictness as little satisfactory as he finds their conduct. Then, in accordance with Deut. xix. 15, on the testimony of two or three witnesses, every charge on account of such gross sins is to be established, and on the basis of this the judgment is to be pronounced. Paul had already predicted this on the occasion of his second visit to those who were then living in such sins, and he now repeats this prediction in his absence to all the rest, who may have fallen into these sins, that, if the repetition of his visit that he had 2 at that time threatened should be realized, he would no longer spare them.

For they had been persuaded that he was strict only in his letters, but that in personal dealings he was much too weak to take energetic measures (cf. x. 1-10); and it seemed as though, by abiding in these sins, they de-

XIII, 8-5] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

hand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, to them that have sinned heretofore, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare; (3) seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you: (4) for he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak ² in him, but we shall live with him through the power of God toward you. (5) Try your own selves,

¹ Or, as though I were present the second time, even though I am now absent.

² Many ancient authorities read with.

3 sired to try the Christ who is speaking in him, to see if the threats that had repeatedly been made would really be carried out. But this Christ they knew from the experience of their own hearts, from which they must know, that He is not weak and powerless towards them, since He has through the workings of His
4 grace shown Himself powerful enough in them. It is indeed true that Christ did, as a result of human weakness, which He had assumed for our sake, and for the purpose of carrying out His redemptive work, even submit to the most disgraceful death by the hands of His foes, without seemingly being able to avert His fate. But He now lives through the power of God, who has recalled Him from death, and the same is true of himself and his associates, who stand in the communion of life with Christ. It is indeed possible that they at times appear weak, when, as was the case on the occasion of his recent visit, they do not yet take extreme and stringent measures against those who commit sin, according to the directions of Christ, which enjoin upon them to spare such persons in the fulfilment of their mission. But in this case they are also perfectly sure that the same divine power which has awakened Christ, will be fully shown in them also, when Christ, in His communion with them, commands
5 them to carry out their threats. The Corinthians, accordingly, are not to put to a test the Christ who is

II CORINTHIANS

[XIII, 6-9]

whether ye are in the faith ; prove your own selves . Or know ye not : as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you ? unless indeed ye be reprobate. (6) But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate. (7) Now we pray to God that ye do no evil ; not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is honorable,¹ though we be as reprobate. (8) For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. (9) For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong : this

¹ Gr. *and that*.

speaking through them, but to examine themselves to see if they are really standing firm in the faith, and if they have denied Him through carnal desire for contention and licentiousness. For they must be quite sure that, if they are in the faith, Jesus Christ is in them, and that this cannot be the case if they cannot in any matter stand the test, because they do not show the workings of Christ in their life and conversation. But the Apostle confidently hopes the Corinthians will 6 see that he and his companions stand the test and will carry out their threats. But the Apostle asks of God only 7 one thing, namely, that among the readers there may no longer be any evil-doing. Not because he wishes it to be shown what they are able to accomplish things by their threats, and in this way be approved. Their purpose is only to do good to their readers, even though thereby they themselves seemed not to be approved, since they do not any more have the opportunity of carrying out their threats. For the Apostles are not able to do 8 anything against the truth, and thus do not wish that the Corinthians remain in their sins, in order thus to prove their own power of punishment. They only advance that which is really good among them ; for they rejoice if they could find no occasion to carry out their 9 threats and in this way appear to be weak, but if the readers are strong enough to overcome entirely all that is yet left of their former sinful life. Only for

XIII, 10-12] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

we also pray for, even your perfecting. (10) For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down.

(11) Finally, brethren, ¹farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you. (12) Salute one another with a holy kiss.

¹ Or, *rejoice: be perfected.*

this one thing he also asks, and that is for their establishment in the state of a perfect and complete Christian life. For this very reason, because his wish is directed to their betterment, and not to the realization of his threats, the Apostle is writing this letter while yet
10 absent, in order to spare them and himself the application of strictness when personally present. This also is in harmony with the authority which has been given him over the congregation, the purpose of which is their edification, but not their destruction, such as would take place by the expulsion of any members who might have been sinning.

11 In this way nothing remains for the Apostle in closing his letter but to admonish them to rejoice in their state as Christians, which has not been disturbed but has been advanced even by his words of severity. It is of most importance that they permit this state to be established in them in perfection; and for this purpose they are to accept his admonitions, that they with one accord strive for this goal and in this way seek to preserve harmony among them. To such more earnest efforts God, from whom love and fears come, will give success, by being with them at all times and
12 working these things in them. As in 1 Cor. xvi. 20, so here Paul directs his readers to seal this communion of love with the holy kiss, and he sends greetings from all the Christians of the place from which he

II CORINTHIANS

[XIII, 13-14]

(13) All the saints salute you.

(14) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

is writing. The salutation, which he was accustomed 18 to write with his own hand, is fuller than usual. He commends them all, including the erring and the weak among them, to the grace of Christ, which He has shown us in His redemptive work, as also to the love of God, which has been won for us again in His redemptive work, and to participation in the Holy Ghost, who has been given to them, and who can and will work in them that which the Apostle wishes for his congregation.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS

I Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through ¹ man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him

¹ Or, *a man*.

1 Paul writes to the congregations in the province of Galatia in Asia Minor, which he had founded when he hastily journeyed through Asia Minor, while being constantly urged onward by the Spirit until he had found a new field for his mission work in Europe. On account of his sickness he had been compelled to remain for a longer period in Galatia, and had made use of this time to preach the gospel there (cf. iv. 18). In the way in which he speaks of himself, we see that people in these congregations had denied the Apostolic office which God had given him. They declared that as he had not seen Christ personally, and still less had been His disciple, he could not have been sent out by Him, but only by some man. At most they were willing to concede that he had received his Apostolic office through the original Apostles, who alone had been called by Christ Himself. Over against this Paul expressly emphasizes the fact that he had received this office through the medium of no human being, but directly from Christ, and thereby from God Himself, since God the Father, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, had exalted Him to the Sonship, because of which He was able now to send forth the messengers of redemption. But only with these few words the Apostle discusses their depreciation of his person.

GALATIANS

[I, 2-4

from the dead), (2) and all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia : (3) Grace to you and peace ¹ from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, (4) who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present

¹ Some ancient authorities read *from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

In his eyes the subject itself, and not his person, is of the greatest importance. This is seen from the blessings which he asks upon the congregations, and with which the letter begins, in which all the brethren who are with Paul join. This salutation has the form that is usual with Paul (cf. Rom. i. 7), but it has this peculiar feature, that in connection with the mention of Christ, there is found a detailed statement concerning that which Christ has done for our redemption. The occasion for this, as will be seen from the letter, is found in the fact, that attempts had been made, in direct opposition to the teachings of Paul, to persuade the Galatians, that if the believers from among the Gentiles desired to partake of the consummation of redemption that had been promised to Israel, they must first accept circumcision and the law, i. e. must become Jews. Against this the Apostle emphasizes the fact, that Christ certainly has done everything that was necessary for the attainment of the consummation of redemption. He had given Himself up for our sins, by dying upon the cross, for the purpose of atoning for these sins. With this we, too, are removed from the present world, which, on account of its sinfulness, is condemned to eternal destruction, so that we have been made certain of the future consummation of redemption. The will of God Himself, who has become our Father in Christ, has ordained this way to our redemption and thereby every other way which precludes the idea that we ourselves are to earn this consummation of

evil ¹ world, according to the will of ² our God and Father:
(5) to whom be the glory ³ for ever and ever. Amen.

(6) I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that

¹ Or, age.

² Or, God and our Father.

³ Gr. unto the ages of the ages.

5 redemption. To demand this according to our own notions, is to deprive God of His honor, which the Apostle glorifies in his usual way (cf. Rom. xi. 36), and seals this with his Amen.

6 The opening of the letter does not contain the usual thanksgiving for what God has done to the congregations in Galatia, but expresses the greatest amazement on account of their perfectly inexplicable conduct. Paul, only a short time ago, when he was traveling from Antiochia to Ephesus, in order to transfer the center of his activity permanently to the latter place, had come through Galatia (cf. Acts xviii. 23). He had on that occasion found his Gentile congregations in a disturbed state of mind, caused by the demands of the older Jewish Christian congregations of that province (cf. 1 Pet. i. 1), that if they would participate in the consummation of redemption they must first be incorporated into the chosen people. But he had paid no attention to this question; he had merely drawn their attention to the fact, that the gospel, which they received from him, made salvation dependent on faith in Christ alone. But scarcely had he arrived at Ephesus when it was reported to him, that those who had begun to preach in Galatia claimed that the original disciples who had declared the gospel to the people of Israel had in no way divorced it from the law. It was accordingly impossible that they should be freed by one who had merely received the gospel from the original Apostles, and had been sent out by them. Freed, that is, from the acceptance of the law, which demanded that they be incorporated with the people of

GALATIANS

[I, 7-9]

called you in the grace of Christ unto a different ¹ gospel ; (7) ² which is not another *gospel* : only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the ¹ gospel of Christ. (8) But though we, or an angel from heaven, should ³ preach ⁴ unto you any gospel ⁵ other than that which we ³ preached unto you, let him be anathema. (9) As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man ³ preacheth unto you any gospel ⁵ other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

² Or, *which is nothing else save that there, &c.*

³ See marginal note on Mt. 11. 5.

⁴ Some ancient authorities omit *unto you*.

⁵ Or, *contrary to that*.

the promise. This had seemed so plausible to the Galatians, that they were actually on the point of complying with these demands. For this reason the Apostle expresses his amazement, that they had so suddenly permitted themselves to be led away from God, who had called them solely on account of the manifestations of grace, which Christ had given them in His atoning death, without making any other demands on them, to become members of His congregation, and be led to a gospel of a different character, which made redemption dependent on other conditions. For there is but *one* gospel, ⁷ and the idea that there was another springs from the fact that certain persons confuse them and pervert the gospel concerning Christ by declaring that there was still something else necessary for redemption besides faith in Him. But even if those who had first declared ⁸ the gospel to them, or even if an angel from heaven should bring them a gospel that was in contradiction to the former, these must become accursed and be destroyed. Now we hear, that when he had recently been with ⁹ them, he had not entered upon the discussion of this question, but promptly had declared all doctrine in disaccord with the gospel that they had received from him, as accursed. He now can only repeat what he at that time said. Evidently attention had been

(10) For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a ¹servant of Christ.

(11) For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man.

(12) For neither did I receive it from ²man, nor was I taught it, but *it came to me* through revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹ Gr. *bondservant*.

² Or, *a man*.

drawn to this abruptness in judgment in order to de-
 10 prive him of the good will of the Galatians. For this reason he ventures to ask, whether his present repetition of such words would show that he tried to win the favor of men and not of God, whose cause he represents. With this the objection was at once refuted, that he had freed the Gentiles from the observance of the law in order to win them all the more easily for Christianity. On the other hand, the question suggested itself, whether it were not better for him to please those who considered it a matter of duty that the Gentiles should accept the law of Israel, instead of adhering to his absolute refusal. But over against this, he maintains that if he acted still as he did in his pre-Christian past, when he tried by his zeal for the law to please his fellow-countrymen, he would not act as a servant of Christ, whom alone he was under obligation to serve.
 11 For this he must boldly declare, that the gospel which he had preached, into the service of which Christ has placed him, does not harmonize with the thoughts and the wishes of men as these naturally are; and that for this reason it is not possible by its proclamation at the
 12 same time to please Christ and men also. For neither he nor the original Apostles, who had received the gospel directly from Christ, had received it from any human being, or had from this source received any instructions in this gospel that they had received from another source, but solely through a revelation in which Christ

GALATIANS

[I, 13-15]

(13) For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: (14) and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age ¹among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions, of my fathers. (15) But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, *even* from my mother's womb, and called

¹ Gr. *in my race*. Comp. 2 Cor. 11. 26.

had revealed Himself to him directly. But a gospel that in this absolute sense is of higher origin, cannot possibly please the natural man.

The Apostle derives the proof of the gospel's divine origin first of all from the fact that before his conversion he had not been in a condition or state of mind to receive instruction of any kind or character concerning the gospel. They had themselves heard of his former 13 life in Judaism, namely, that he was a fanatical persecutor of the Christian congregations, and sought only to destroy these utterly. At that time certainly he could not have sought or received from the members of the congregations any instructions concerning the gospel that was proclaimed to them. He was busy with altogether different things. It was his ambition to play a prominent rôle in Judaism, and he succeeded in 14 making progress in this direction beyond many men of his own age in his nation. Vastly more than these he, who was the son of a Pharisaic home, became a zealot for the ancient traditions that were so carefully observed at home. These very traditions made it entirely impossible for him to accept any traditions whatsoever concerning the gospel from men. Not any- 15 thing that had been by these handed down to him, had prepared him for the gospel, but it was God alone, according to His free counsel, who had determined the moment in which his conversion was to take place. God did not do this because He had in any way prepared

me through his grace, (16) to reveal his Son in me, that I might ¹preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: (17) neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

¹ See marginal note on Mt. 11. 5.

him for this, but because from his very birth He had set him apart for His purposes, and had selected him to carry them out; and because He did not purpose to call him into the congregation, as was the case with other Christians, by the proclamation of the gospel, but through a special manifestation of grace, such as he by his previous life had not deserved. However
16 this manifestation of grace, for which naturally He was compelled to select the proper time Himself, consisted in this, that He manifested His Son in his heart. For through the revelation to him of Christ near Damascus, it became once for all certain to him that Jesus was the exalted Son of God, who would save him and the entire sinful world through a pure and free grace, and would in this demand no human service, since God Himself by this call worked faith in Christ in his heart. But this took place in his case for the special purpose of entrusting him with the preaching among the Gentiles of this Son of God, in whom alone is redemption. At that time he did not at once consult
17 with any human being concerning the revelation that had been given him, because this revelation was in its divine character so clear and so certain to him that it needed no human explanation or confirmation. Nor did he go away from the place where his conversion had taken place, and journey, say, to Jerusalem, because he did not find a person there suitable for this purpose, in order to get instruction from the original Apostles, but he went to Arabia, where there was no possibility of

GALATIANS

[I, 18-23]

(18) Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to ¹ visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. (19) But other of the apostles saw I none, ² save ³ James the Lord's brother. (20) Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. (21) Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. (22) And I was still unknown by face unto

¹ Or, *become acquainted with.*

² Or, *but only.*

³ Or, *Jacob.*

receiving such instruction; and from there he again returned to Damascus. Only later, when no less than 18 three years had passed since his conversion, he indeed did go up to Jerusalem, but then, too, not for the purpose of receiving instruction of any kind concerning the gospel that had been revealed to him, but to become acquainted with Cephas, i. e. Peter. But as on this occasion he remained with the latter only two weeks, after years had passed without his having sought him, it could not possibly have been his purpose to go to school to him. But he had not even met 19 any other Apostle except Peter on that occasion, except James, the brother of the Lord, who in the strict sense did not belong to the disciples but yet must be mentioned because he belonged to the heads of the original congregation. Him he had merely seen, but had not associated with him, as he had done with Peter. In reference to what he in this way has written concerning the first period after his conversion, for the purpose of proving that he had not received his gospel 20 from the original disciples, it is clear before the face of God that he does not lie. But in reference to 21 the latter period, such instruction was no longer possible, since, after that brief visit in Jerusalem, he had gone to the region of Syria and Cilicia (cf. Acts ix. 30), which were entirely removed from the fields of the original Apostles. Nor did he have any dealings with the Christian congregation in Judea, to whom at that 22 time when he left Palestine he was personally a total

the churches of Judæa which were in Christ: (23) but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now ¹preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc; (24) and they glorified God in me.

II Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. (2) And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the

¹ See marginal note on Mt. 11. 5.

stranger. In addition, he had at that time already begun to do evangelical work in Jerusalem, independently (cf. Acts ix. 28, 29), and it was only reported of him that he who formerly had persecuted the congregation was now preaching the same gospel which he had once
 28 tried to destroy. But so false is the allegation that the gospel which he preached was a falsification of that of the original Apostles, that the congregation in Jerusalem, when they heard of his preaching, actually glorified God for that which He had done to him.

1 What Paul had said of the congregations in Judea induces him to speak of the recognition of his gospel by the original Apostles. Not for the purpose of narrating his journeys to Jerusalem, but to emphasize the fact that he had allowed fourteen years to pass by, without having felt the necessity of reaching an understanding with the original Apostles in reference to the mission work among the Gentiles, which had in the meanwhile been begun, he states that at this time he went up to Jerusalem. For the fact that he went up with Barnabas, with whom for the first time he undertook Gentile mission work on a grand scale, shows that this was the subject of discussion, and that his taking Titus with him was closely connected with this matter, becomes clear at once. But at this time, too, he did not
 2 go up on account of any need of his own, but in accordance with a revelation, which induced him to lay his gospel before the original congregation. For the mat-

¹ gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who ² were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. (8) But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised :

¹ See marginal note on ch. 1. 6.

² Or, are.

ter under consideration was now no longer the gospel which he had preached in Jerusalem, and on account of which the Christian congregations in Judea had expressed their great joy, but that gospel which he had preached among the Gentiles, in which he declared to them the message of redemption without demanding of them to become converts to Judaism and to accept the law. The fact that these measures were not at once approved of by the Jerusalemites is clear from this, that he entered into special negotiations with those who were recognized as the real authoritative persons, and these were, of course, the original Apostles. True, he, on his part, did not stand in need of an answer to the question, whether he was working or had worked successfully, which would surely have been the case, if the faith alone in Christ, which he demanded of the Gentiles, were not sufficient to secure redemption for them. In this case he would not have left this question for fourteen years without an answer. But the revelation in question had made him certain of this, that this question had to be answered, in order that his congregations from among the heathen would not be confused by the doubts that proceeded from Jerusalem as to their state of grace. But so little was his work declared to be in vain by the original Apostles, that 8 circumcision was not even demanded of the Gentiles who had been converted by him, and not even Titus was compelled to submit to circumcision. As Titus, who, because he was a Greek, as a companion of the Jew, Paul, according to Jewish ideas, at all times contaminated the Apostle by his intimate associations and

(4) ¹and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: (5) to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the ²gospel might continue with you. (6) But from those who ³were reputed to be somewhat (⁴whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth

¹ Or, *but it was because of.* ² See marginal note on ch. 1. 6.
³ Or, *are.* ⁴ Or, *what they once were.*

thereby exposed the Christians from among the Jews, with whom the Apostle had dealings, to such defilement, Paul, according to his principles, quite properly, out of consideration for the weaker Christian brethren, could have caused him to be circumcised, and this had evidently been demanded by many in Jerusalem. But he did not do this, and took this step on account of those whom the Apostle declares had against all right forced their way into the congregation, because they did not accept the true faith in the free grace of God in Christ. Such men had found their way into the congregation in Antioch where Paul was laboring, in order to find out whether they could not prove that the freedom from the law, which Paul, together with his Gentile Christians, considered as established in the living communion of life with Christ, was the cause of an immoral life, and whether they then could, with a show of reason, force these to submit to the law. To these men Paul and Barnabas could not for a moment yield, in reference to the obedience which they demanded, so that the truth of the gospel, according to which salvation comes by faith alone, remain unshaken, and that not, by appealing to that case in which Paul himself had permitted a Gentile to be circumcised, the same demand could be made of others, like the Galatians. Accordingly the circumcision of Titus could have been forced only at the cost of a refusal to recognize him as a Christian brother. But this those who were accepted

not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me : (7) but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the ¹gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with *the* ¹gospel of the circumcision (8) (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision

¹ See marginal note on ch. 1. 6.

as the authorities by no means demanded. For the very reason that these men occupied this prominence, Paul had in particular discussed with them that question which had brought him to Jerusalem, and not as though it were necessary for him first to receive the confirmation of his gospel from the original disciples of Jesus. For him personally the fact that they had been such disciples did not have the significance that it had for the original congregation, in which this authority certainly counted for much. He has learned by experience that God does not regard the person as such, as He revealed His Son and the salvation that He had founded to him, who was not a disciple but a persecutor of Christ. But he can appeal for this to the fact, that when he explained to them his gospel, nothing was yet added by these authorities, i. e. it was not demanded that he was yet to supplement or to improve this gospel by accepting the obligation of circumcision and of the law as a second condition of redemption. On the contrary, they had seen in his account that the gospel, 7 which was free from the law, had been entrusted to him for the benefit of the Gentiles, just as to Peter, who, as the head of the original Apostles, had devoted himself chiefly to the Jews, the gospel for the circumcision had been given, which as such was and remained committed to the law. For God had given to him the success among the Gentiles that He had accorded to Peter in the Jewish mission. And as they recognized 8 by this that God had given to him the same grace

wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); (9) and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, ¹ James and Cephas and John, they who ² were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; (10) only *they would* that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

(11) But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to

¹ Or, *Jacob*.

² Or, *are*.

of the Apostolic office as to themselves, therefore those who were regarded as the pillars of the original congregation, namely, James, the brother of the Lord, 9 who, since Peter had been devoting himself chiefly to the Jewish missions abroad, had taken his place at the head of the congregation in Jerusalem, together with Peter and John, by giving their hands to Paul and Barnabas, had bound themselves to him in a fellowship in mission work, which they agreed to divide among themselves in a fraternal way. According to this agreement Paul and Barnabas were to devote themselves entirely to Gentile mission work, so that the three others could devote themselves entirely to Jewish 10 missions. Only in this respect are Paul and Barnabas to concern themselves with the Jews, that they are to remember the poor among them in their work in the heathen lands. Paul is able to refer to the fact, that he had for this reason been zealous to carry out this promise, as he had already been collecting in the Galatian congregations for the Christians of Jerusalem (cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 1).

Paul concludes the proof of the absolutely divine origin of his gospel, by showing that he on occasions had also insisted upon this gospel over against the original Apostles. He begins by describing the occasion of this. Peter 11 had come to Antioch, the place of Paul's activity, to a congregation predominantly Gentile Christian. Here

the face, because he stood condemned. (12) For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles ; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. (13) And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him ; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. (14) But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the ¹ gospel, I said unto Cephas before *them* all, If thou, being

¹ See marginal note on ch. 1. 6.

Paul had opposed him face to face, because he was condemned by his contradictory conduct. He, subordinat- 12
ing the strict legal customs of the Jews to the duty of Christian internal communion, had eaten at table with the Gentile Christians, and had induced the Jewish Christian part of the congregation to do the same. Then several men from James came down who claimed that eating together on the part of Jews and Gentiles was a violation of the agreement made in Jerusalem, which was based on the presumption that the Jews were to adhere to the obligations of the law. Fearful of appearing here to be less faithful to the law, Peter in anxiety had now withdrawn and had separated himself from the Gentile Christians. The other believers 13
from among the Jews had followed his example, and finally Barnabas, the messenger to the Gentiles, had been carried away by their hypocrisy, as Paul openly calls this denial of their better convictions concerning the correctness of a free intercourse with their Gentiles. The Apostle could not endure this. He saw that this conduct, measured by the standards of the truth of the gospel, was false ; and in the presence of the whole 14
congregation, he said this to Peter to his face. What he said on that occasion he here repeats to the Galatians naturally reproducing it freely and with an undoubted reference to the errors, through which the attempt was made to lead them away from the right paths. He

a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? (15) We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, (16) yet knowing that a man is not ¹justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law

¹ Or, *accounted righteous*: and so elsewhere. Comp. Rom. 2. 13.

proceeded from the question, why, if Peter, as a Jew, could accept Gentile customs, as he had done when he ate with the Gentiles, and still could regard it as correct, even if he, out of fear of men, denied his better knowledge, he should force the Gentiles to accept Jewish customs? For if he, on account of the Gentile customs, were to refuse them Christian fellowship, which they certainly would not want to give up, then
15 they could not help themselves. Paul reminds them of the fact that they, the Jewish Christians, solely by virtue of their birth, and without any merit on their part, are Jews, and therefore, indeed, not such who, on account of their Gentile descent, are sinners, because from their birth these latter had been without the law.
16 And yet every one among them knew, if he examined himself honestly, that no human being whatever is pronounced just on account of the works of the law, because his conduct never absolutely conformed to the demands of the law. Unless this be the case, that through the faith in Christ he really attained the power for this, and that thus the weaknesses that yet remained in point of his fulfilment of the law would for Christ's sake be forgiven him out of grace. Hence he and those like him have accepted faith in Christ, but of course for the purpose that they may through faith become justified, and not by the works of the law, which, as all recognize, never are perfect; which is the case, not on account of the character of this or that

shall no flesh be justified. (17) But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. (18) For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. (19) For I through the law died unto the law, that I

person, but on account of the carnal nature of man as such.

But if the law in itself is incapable of leading men to salvation, then it is without a purpose and unjust to demand of the Gentiles that they accept the law when they are seeking for salvation in Christ. If, on the 17 other hand, those who now, on the basis of the work of redemption by Christ, seek to be justified, are nevertheless found to be sinners by Peter and the Jewish Christians, who, by trying to force the heathen Christians to accept the law, declare all who live without the law to be sinners, then Christ, who has caused them, without the works of the law, to seek redemption at His hands, would be a promoter of sin. But this is im- 18 possible. For, in reality, this takes place only if a person, as was the case with Peter, again builds up that which he has torn down, and thereby declares that his former tearing down had been wrong. For if he had formerly through his conversion to faith declared that the law in itself cannot lead to redemption, and if he now declares this by trying to force the Gentiles to a legal life, that the law is necessary for salvation, and thereby declares his own former disregard of the law to be a transgression of the law, then he alone is the one who by such a contradictory conduct declares himself to be a transgressor of the law. For him, the Apostle, this is absolutely impossible. For he has not, in an arbitrary man- 19 ner, declared himself free from the law; but through the law, on account of his transgressions of the law, he has

might live unto God. (20) I have been crucified with Christ ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me : and that *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, *the faith* which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. (21) I do not make void the grace of God : for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.

been condemned to death, and with the death of his old man, which he underwent in baptism, he has died also to all his former promises, and accordingly to the law, in order in the future to live to God, and to His service alone. If he is asked how the death of his old self had been brought about, the answer is that it is his baptism that has transplanted him into the communion of life with Christ (cf. Rom. vi. 3), in which death he has also suffered the death of a criminal with Christ, which his old man had amply deserved, but which Christ has taken upon Himself for our sakes. He does not live any more according to his old self ; in him Christ alone lives through His Spirit. The life that he lives in the flesh is no longer a life which is bound to its old needs and duties, but is entirely a life in Christ's faith. But this faith is a confidence in salvation, which does not trust to any deeds or words, but upon God alone, who has awakened this faith in him, and upon Christ, who through the evidences of His love, which He has given in submitting to the death of atonement, has won a
21 right to this confidence. It would be the greatest injustice to both, if he, by returning to the service of the law, should despise and disregard the grace of God, which had given him this righteousness. For if in any case righteousness could be received by the law, then Christ has died without reason, because if righteousness can be gained by any other way, His sacrifice would have been entirely unnecessary.

GALATIANS

[III, 1-8]

III O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? (2) This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the ¹hearing of faith? (8) Are ye

¹ Or, *message*.

The Apostle begins the introduction to the second part of this Epistle, in which the points under controversy are to be discussed doctrinally, with an appeal to the experience of redemption on the part of the 1 readers. The significant address shows that he is turning again to the readers from what he has just said about Peter. It is beyond comprehension for anybody to permit oneself to be bewitched by another, no matter who he may be, so that one seems to have forgotten everything that ought to protect him against such influences for all times. But this has taken place, since Christ before then had been pictured to their eyes so vividly that His images ought to have been indelibly stamped upon their hearts, and that, too, as the One who was crucified. But in this case they would know that every lapse into the doings of the law makes the sacrifice of His death useless. He desired to hear from their own lips, and as the confession of their deepest experience, the one thing which will reveal the entire foolishness of their present confusion. They are all conscious 2 of this, that in baptism they have received the Spirit. Have they received Him through any legal service which before this had been demanded of them, or through the preaching of faith? The Apostle intentionally does not set up faith in antithesis to the works of the law, because it would then seem as though one kind of a service was taking the place of another. But faith is no service; for it is itself produced by the message which declares that it is the sole condition of redemption. If in this way, then, the beginning of re- 8

so foolish ? having begun in the Spirit, ¹are ye now perfected in the flesh ? (4) Did ye suffer so many things in vain ? if it be indeed in vain. (5) He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh ²miracles ³among you, *doeth he it by the*

¹ Or, *do ye now make an end in the flesh ?*

² Gr. *powers*.

³ Or, *in*.

demptive life is in nowise conditioned on legal works, it certainly would be more than foolish to persuade oneself that these were necessary for the consummation of salvation. This would be completing through the flesh what had been begun by the Spirit. For their life as Christians had begun with this, that the Spirit of God, who is operative in the message of redemption, had worked faith in them, and that the Spirit, who has been given them in baptism, on the basis of this faith, works in them a new life. But the deeds of the law, through which they now propose to secure the consummation of redemption, certainly belong to those things which can be accomplished through natural and human activity ; and also, independently of the fact that this activity is still hemmed and misled by sin, such works can never secure for us anything that comes from God alone, such as the consummation of redemption does.

4 For all those great and rich experiences of grace, which they have already felt in their Christian calling, would have been perfectly useless if they would not cause them in the future to permit the Spirit alone to work in them. Even if it appears almost impossible that such experiences can have been had in vain, it nevertheless has actually been the case, if they now would suffer themselves to be deceived by these advocates of the law. For this reason the Apostle again re-

5 turns to these experiences of grace. For they have not only once, at their baptism, received the Spirit, but this Spirit constantly gives them what they need of new spiritual strength to enable them to continue and

works of the law, or by the ¹ hearing of faith? (6) Even as Abraham ² believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. (7) ³ Know therefore that they that are of

¹ Or, *message*.

² Gen. xv. 6.

³ Or, *Ye perceive*.

to perfect the new life. And, indeed, more than this, He works miraculous powers in them, through His Spirit, as these appear in the manifold spiritual gifts of the Apostolic times. But if the question is again asked whether these are the result of any works by which they try to fulfil the law, or come through the message of faith sent by God, the answer in this case, too, can not be doubtful.

The Apostle enters upon the discussion of the history 6 of Abraham to prove that the consummation of salvation is not dependent on the works of the law but upon faith. For the attempt had been made to persuade the Galatians that, because the promise had been given to Abraham and to his seed, the Gentiles could share in the promised consummation of redemption only if by circumcision and the fulfilment of the law they should become incorporated into the nation that descended from Abraham. This had been the case all along with the proselytes to Judaism who desired to partake of all the promises of Israel. But now the Apostle draws attention to this, that of Abraham the same is true that is true of the Christians who had experienced grace through the faith that had been awakened by the message of redemption. For the experience of grace made by Abraham was his justification (cf. Rom. iv.), and this was attributed to him, because, according to Gen. xv. 6, on the basis of the promise that had been given him (namely, that of a good progeny), he placed his confidence in God, and this faith was counted to him for righteousness. From this we certainly must see, that the true sons of Abraham, who are to inherit his promise, are not his children in 7

faith, the same are sons of Abraham. (8) And the scripture, foreseeing that God ¹would justify the ²Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, *saying*, ³In thee shall all nations be blessed. (9) So then they that are of

¹ Gr. *justifieth*.

² Gr. *nations*.

³ Gen. xii. 3.

the flesh, who as such have the sign of circumcision on them, but are those who are such through faith, i.e. who have become like him in faith. For if the redemptive gift of righteousness, which Abraham already possessed, was given to him in consequence of his faith, then only those children who are similar to him in their faith can have a claim of his heritage in all the further redemptive gifts that were promised him. But the Scriptures speak of these redemptive gifts when they announce to Abraham already the same message of redemption that they declare to us to-day. This Paul, supported by Gen. xii. 3 ; xviii. 18, finds summarized in the words, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed." For this certainly signifies that they in and with him are to become partakers of the blessings that have been promised him. But it is in the nature of the case impossible that the heathen, who are sinful and hence displeasing to God, can be blessed by God. The Scriptures, accordingly, when they give this promise to Abraham, must have foreseen that God by faith justifies the Gentiles, who do not at all possess the law and cannot by its fulfilment become pleasing to God, just as He had

9 done in the case of Abraham. From this it necessarily follows, that those who are what they are through faith, namely, children of Abraham in the sense of being like unto him, will be blessed with the believing Abraham, as this has actually already begun in its fulfilment through the blessing found in the bestowal of the Spirit upon them. For the Gentiles stand in no such relation to Abraham as is found in bodily descent

faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. (10) For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, ¹ Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them. (11) Now that no man is justified ² by the law before God, is evident: for, ³ The righteous shall live by faith; (12) and the

¹ Dt. xxvii. 26.

² Gr. *én*.

³ Hab. ii. 4.

or in circumcision, but solely by the likeness of their faith. But if they, even after they attained to faith, 10 want to secure by the law the right to be regarded as the genuine children of Abraham, as this was demanded of the Galatians, they would attain the very opposite of that which they aim to secure, which is, participation in the blessing of Abraham. For as Deut. xxvii. 26 pronounces a curse upon all who do not abide in the doing of all the individual things that the law demands, and as this is absolutely impossible in any case, it is clear that all who in any way try through the works of the law to become the children of Abraham, are under a curse that makes the divine blessing absolutely impossible. But that as a matter of fact nobody is declared just by the judgment of God on account of his fulfilment of the law and hence a person who complied with all the demands, is most assuredly clear 11 from the passage in Hab. ii. 4, that is so well known to the readers, in which it is declared that life or eternal happiness is promised to the just on account of his faith. But the law in its commands does not come from faith, but it demands, according to the well-known words of Lev. xviii. 5, that something must be *done*, and to this it promises life. And as this doing under no circumstances fully complies with the demands of God, then those who are under the law, such as the Jews, can never escape from the curse of the law, and hence can never inherit the blessing of Abraham.

law is not of faith; but, ¹He that doeth them shall live in them. (13) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, ²Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

(15) Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed,

¹ Lev. xviii. 5.

² Dt. xxi. 23.

- 18 For this very reason it was necessary that Christ be sent, in order to buy them free from the curse of the law, among whom Paul, who was also a Jew, includes himself. But this He did by taking the curse upon Himself on the cross, because, according to Deut. xxi. 23, a curse impends over every one who is put to death on the gallows. But if the Jews could be delivered from
- 14 the curse of the law only through the redemptive work of Christ, then thereby the purpose of God was made manifest, that the blessing of Abraham was to come upon the Gentiles, not through the law, which would have involved them in the same curse that hung over the Jews, but only because of Jesus as the Mediator of their redemption. But if this is the case, then the Jews, among whom Paul counts himself, could only in the same way as the Gentiles do, attain that salvation which had already been bestowed upon them by the bestowal of the first part of the fulfilment of the promise given to Abraham, namely, by the imparting of the Spirit given through the faith in Christ.

- If the law, which had been given to the people of the promise as their unique possession, could not achieve the fulfilment of this promise, the question arises, what the purpose of the law as such had been then. The Apostle wants to explain this to the Galatians according
- 15 to the analogy of human legal relations. It is well known that if a man's testament is in question, the test-

no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto. (16) Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many ; but as of one, ¹ And to thy seed, which is Christ. (17) Now this I say : A covenant confirmed

¹ Gen. xiii. 15 ; xvii. 8.

ament, when it has once been legally recognized, cannot be changed by any condition added later. But now the promises have again and again been given to Abraham and his seed (cf. Gen. xiii. 15 ; xvii. 8). From this fact 16 the false teachers have concluded, that the Gentiles must be incorporated into the seed of Abraham, i. e. into the people who have descended from him, by virtue of the circumcision and the adoption of the law, if they would have a share in the promises that have been given to him and which the entire New Testament interprets as having been realized and still being realized in the redemption through Christ. But the Apostle draws attention to the fact, that God had, in connection with the promises, spoken of one person and not of many, and that, accordingly He to whom with and after Abraham the promise had been given, can be only Christ. This interpretation, is undoubtedly inadmissible from a philological point of view ; but what the Apostle wants to say thereby is nevertheless perfectly correct. If the promise given to Abraham is interpreted as referring to the salvation brought through Christ, then the seed of Abraham, in which this promise is to be realized, can in the highest sense be none but Christ, and can be the people who are descended from Abraham, only in so far as they are most intimately connected with Him, and through Him become partakers of the promised redemption. To this testamentary decision that is given in this promise, the Apostle, as he states, wants to apply what he has said above concerning a human testament. He considers this decision as a testament 17

III, 18-19] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. (18) For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise. (19) What then is the law? It was added be-

divinely established through God's promises. It is accordingly impossible that the law, which was given centuries later, could invalidate a testament that has been in undisputed force, and in this way make the
18 promise of none effect. For this would infallibly take place, if the inheritance could come from the law, i. e. if the attainment of the redemption that has been promised to Abraham were made conditional on the fulfilment of the law. Because in this case this would not be accomplished on the basis of the promise, but as a reward won by the fulfilment of the law. But now God through the promise has given to Abraham the salvation that has been secured in Christ as a gift of grace. In this case, then, the old decision of God's will would have been invalidated through the law, if this afterwards had made the fulfilment of the promise conditional upon the fulfilment of the law.

19 The question then arises, what the purpose of the law is, if it is not to be a condition of the attainment of redemption. The Apostle answers this question exactly as he does in Rom. v. 26, by saying that it had been added to the promise, in order at all times to increase the transgressions that were inevitable under the law. It was only Christ who was to remove the transgressions which aroused the wrath of God and in this way prevented the fulfilment of the promise. But for this very reason the promise given to Abraham refers to Him, and the law was only added until the seed should come to whom the promises were

cause of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made ; *and it was* ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. (20) Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one ; but God is one. (21) Is the law then against

given. The law has accordingly only a transitory importance. But this can be presumed from the fact that it has not, as was the case with the promise, been immediately given by God, but had been bestowed through the angels as mediators. This was in the days of the Apostle concluded from Deut. xxxiii. 2 (cf. Acts vii. 38-53). Nor was it ever given directly to the people, but only through the hands of a mediator, namely, Moses. But a single person, such as God is, has no need of a mediator, but the mass of the people do, because 20 these, on account of their sinful uncleanness, dare not approach God and cannot receive the law directly from His hands. But for this reason the law could only continually call forth in this sinful people new transgressions, which brought the curse upon them, and for this reason made it impossible to secure this promise given to Abraham. But if this is the case, then the question arises all the more, whether the law is not contrary to the promise, since it prevents the fulfilment of the promise. The Apostle bases the indignant denial of this 21 on the fact that, on the contrary, if a law had been given which had been able to achieve the fulfilment of this promise, i. e. had been able to work out eternal redemption, such a law would rather be in contradiction to the promise. Because in this case righteousness, without which it is impossible to attain life, in reality would come from the law and would be secured by its fulfilment, and then eternal life would no longer be a promised gift of grace but the payment of a self-achieved righteousness. But now, on the contrary, the Scrip-

the promises of God? God forbid : for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law. (22) But the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

(23) But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (24) So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

22 tures have concluded all things under sin, i. e. have by their infallible judgment declared all men to be sinful, so that the origination of righteousness through one's own deeds or merits is out of the question. But in this case the promise can and shall be given to the believers, as this was demanded of the Galatians, not on the basis of any deeds of the law, but exclusively through a confidence in redemption that is put upon Christ. But before this faith came, the people of the law, among whom Paul at this place counts himself, 23 too, were kept in a prison, over whom the law, as it were, had been set as a keeper, since it constantly produced new transgressions and in this way prevented them from attaining to a self-achieved righteousness. In this law the nation remained incarcerated until the new way to redemption came, which was to be revealed 24 later in faith. In this way the law became an educator, which brought the nation to a knowledge of their weakness and their lost condition, and in this way directed them to Christ, as the only Mediator of redemption, so that through faith they attain to redemption, and thus receive the inheritance of the promise only through grace.

All acquisition of redemption through the works of the law is made impossible by the fact that the believers are free from the law. If the law had only the

GALATIANS

[III, 25-29]

(25) But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. (26) For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. (28) There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

purpose to educate the Jews for Christ and for the faith 25
in Him, then, with the entrance of faith, they have
completed the school of the law. For all the readers,
including too the Jews among them, through con- 26
fidence in the redemption that is based on Christ, have
become full sons of God, by whom they knew that they
have been justified by faith and have become His
children. For this they have received an actual
guarantee in their baptism, through which they have
been received into the communion of believers. For
through baptism in Christ they have been transplanted 27
into the living communion with Christ (cf. Rom. vi. 3),
so that they henceforth walk clothed with His be-
ing as with a new garment. With this all the former
national and social distinctions have ceased, even the 28
difference between man and woman no longer exists.
For in the living communion with Christ they have all
been joined into the unity of one person, who constitute 29
only a part of Christ, with whom they are intimately
united. But in this case they then belong to the seed of
Abraham, to which, according to iii. 16,-19. the promise
had been given. And according to the promise they are
then the heirs of the redemption that has been prom-
ised to Abraham and to his seed. It is then not neces-
sary for them to earn for themselves the claim to this
inheritance through an acceptance of the law and of
circumcision; but they are thereby assured that they

IV But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all ; (2) but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. (3) So we also, when we were children, were

are full sons of God, since only such can inherit this salvation.

In what sense the Apostle says this, he must yet explain in reference to the former Jews among the Galatians, concerning whom it would seem that they had not first through the living communion with Christ become the heirs of the promise of Abraham. For those heresies were founded on the very idea that the Jews were the heirs by virtue of their membership in the chosen people, into which the believers from among the Gentiles must be incorporated with them through circumcision and
1 the acceptance of the law. But now the son, who, as such is legally entitled to the inheritance of everything left by the father at his death, is, while he is yet in his
2 youth, in a state of dependence that is not different from that of a slave, until the time comes, when he, in accordance with the testamentary direction of the father, is to enter upon the possession of his inheritance, and so is under guardians, who manage his education, and under stewards, who have charge of his possessions, in order to give him from the proceeds of these what he needs. Exactly the same was the condition of the former Jews among the believers, with whom the
3 Apostle in this case too includes himself. In that state of immaturity and in their minority they were in the dependence of slaves on those ordinances which are characteristic of the elementary wisdom of non-Christian humanity. To these elementary foundations, as it were, the alphabet of religious life, the law also belongs, under the direction of which they were to be

GALATIANS

[IV, 4-7]

held in bondage under the ¹ rudiments of the world : (4) but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (7) So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son ; and if a son, then an heir through God.

¹ Or, *elements*. ² Pet. 3. 10, 12.

trained for a higher form of this life. But when the period of time had been fulfilled which God had set 4 apart for this preparation of Judaism, He sent forth His Son, who like every human being, was born of a woman, and, like every Jew, was placed under the law, although from all eternity He had been in harmony with the will of the Father in the freedom of His Sonship. But through thus being subjected to the law it was His purpose to make those who were under the law free from their obligations to the law, so that they 5 could receive the position of sonship that was intended for them and that had only for the time being been withheld from them. In this way the children of Abraham in the flesh have become sons in the full sense and heirs only through the mediatorship of Christ. And now the Apostle addresses himself to all his readers, the majority of whom consisted of believers from among the Gentiles, in order to show them how they have become certain of their sonship, through a new act on the part of God, which intentionally is described as the sending out of the Son. God has sent 6 into our hearts the Spirit of His Son, who is of course given only to those who, like Himself, were sons ; and this Spirit in the consciousness of our hearts makes us certain of our sonship, by working in ourselves that childlike call of Abba (cf. Rom. viii. 15) by which we designate God as our Father. For this reason the 7

(8) Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods: (9) but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly ¹ rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again? (10)

¹ Or. *elements*.

Apostle can cry out to them all, that they are no longer servants, who have no share in the inheritance of the Son, but are sons, who as such are also heirs. Through God they have become such, who through the Spirit has made them certain of their sonship; and they therefore need no longer earn this inheritance through the works of the law.

So far he had been speaking only of the Jews as such, 8 who notwithstanding that they were destined for the inheritance yet stood under the law. But the Gentile Christians too, in their heathen past, when they did not know God, had slavishly worshipped those who by their nature were not gods, which act was only all the more disgraceful, and they only now, when they have learned to know God, or rather when they had 9 been recognized by God as those, whom He regarded as capable of being called and being put under the influence of the Spirit, were delivered from this slavery. At that time they too had been enslaved by the elementary principles of religious life, which could not achieve what real religion is intended to achieve, namely, the condition of being pleasing to God, and could not give what religion is intended to secure, namely, redemption. How incomprehensible it is that they should desire to return to those weak and miserable elements, to which, according to v. 8. the law also belongs, since they then, as though they were only beginning their religious life, would voluntarily return to the servitude of these ele- 10 ments. They had already introduced the Jewish festi-

Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. (11) I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain.

(12) I beseech you, brethren, become as I *am*, for I also *am become* as ye *are*. Ye did me no wrong: (13) but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I ¹ preached the gospel

¹ See marginal note on ch. 1. 8.

val observances, because this was the part of the legal cultus which most of all appealed to the former Gentiles as a substitute for their old heathen cultus, namely the observation of the sabbath, the new moons, the Jewish festival seasons, and the new year celebrations. Indeed, the Apostle was afraid, that he had worked in vain among them, if they were so quickly to fall away from the truth which he had proclaimed to them.

The introduction to the third chief part of this letter is also entered upon by a personal address to the readers. They are to be free from all servitude to the 12 law, as he also is. For he, too, in his work among them, has become as they are. Although he was a born Jew, who otherwise lived according to Jewish customs, he has in their midst adopted their customs, and has become a Gentile to the Gentiles (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 21). It is only right that brother should repay brother in equity. For this reason he can ask them for such treatment. Then, too, their former conduct does not make him fear, that they will offend him by declining to accede to his wish. They have so far not done him 18 the least wrong, but rather they know full well that their dealings with him in the past had been entirely of a different nature. For this reason, and in contrast to his last visit, he reminds them of the earlier visit when he proclaimed the gospel to them. At that time he was in bodily weakness, which compelled him to tarry among them, and this forced stay he utilized

unto you the ¹first time: (14) and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor ²rejected; but ye received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. (15) Where then is that gratulation ³of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. (16) So then am I become your enemy, ⁴by telling you the truth? (17) They zealously seek you in

¹ Gr. *former*.² Gr. *spat out*.³ Or, *of yours*.⁴ Or, *by dealing truly with you*.

14 for his gospel proclamation. It was indeed a severe temptation for them, which comes to them on account of his flesh. For it certainly was a very natural thing from the very outset, to refuse to listen to a man who was as weak as he and debilitated by sickness. But they rejected the temptation, as though they would be deterred by his physical condition and did not despise him, as though it was a matter of course that they would not listen to a man like himself, or would feel disgusted on account of his condition. But rather they received him as a messenger of God and even like the Saviour Jesus Christ Himself. What has become of this enthusiasm, with which they at that time considered themselves fortunate in having the Apostle in
15 their midst? For he gives them the testimony that at that time they would have been ready for every sacrifice in his behalf, even for that which was nearest and dearest to them. Had this been possible they would have subjected themselves to the most terrible mutilation; they
16 would have torn out their eyes to give them to him. And now? Now he has at once become their greatest enemy instead of their benefactor, because he wants to hinder them in that which they by deception have been led to believe in reference to the condition of
17 salvation. But thereby he has only told the truth among them. He knows full well what has produced this transformation in them. It is the heretical

GALATIANS

[IV, 18-20]

no good way ; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them. (18) But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you. (19) My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you—(20) but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone ; for I am perplexed about you.

teachers who are anxious to gain their favor, but not in a commendable manner. These men want to exclude them from the Christian communion, i. e. do not want any longer to recognize them as true members of the same, as long as they are not circumcised, so that they on their part may try to gain the favor of the opponents by buying from them the recognition of their Christian brotherhood by the acceptance of circumcision and of the law. The fact that a body is being courted is something praiseworthy ; however in each case it must be in a good cause, and hence in the service of the truth, 18 and not only when he is present with them. If those men have in a bad cause courted their favor, he now in turn, as he did at the time when he was with them, continues in his good cause. Like a mother, as it were, 19 he wants to give birth to his children again, and this demands painful throes, as it is easier to convert a man the first time than to repeat the process when he has begun to fall away. But he must do this painful work, until, as the fruit of the body must first be fully matured before it can be born, Christ has been fully developed in them, and He has become their one and all, and they seek their salvation in nothing else than in Him. But even if he regarded it as a pleasure to be 20 seeking their good-will by letter, still he yet would prefer in this very moment to be in the midst of them. On the occasion of his last visit, the decision with

IV, 21-23] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

(21) Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? (22) For it is written, ¹ that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. (23) ²Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise.

¹ Gen. xvi. 15.

² Gen. xxi. 2.

which he had curtly rejected the opposition to his gospel had offended them; and this rather had the effect of driving them into the arms of his opponents. How he now would speak in a gentle tone and try by love that mildly persuades, to attain that which then his severity failed to do! He is in embarrassment, how he is to begin this among them. He accordingly drops the subject that had caused such excited controversy among them and enters upon a more quiet doctrinal discussion.

This part also begins with a discussion of the biblical foundation of what the Apostle desires to say. He asks whether those, who are willing to subject themselves to the law, do not therefore hear what the law says. For the entire Scriptures of the Old Testament, as this was regularly read in the congregation, have a paramount importance for us, and, in this way, Paul sees in the story of the two sons of Abraham an important lesson for the present time. The Scriptures expressly distinguish between the son born of the handmaiden (Ishmael, cf. Gen. xvi. 1-5), and the son born of Sarah, his wife (Isaac, cf. Gen. xxi. 3). Both were sons of Abraham, but the one was begotten according to the manner of the flesh, i. e. in a natural and human way, while the other was born through the promise given to Abraham, which as a powerful and life-working word of God, contrary to all human possibility (cf. Rom. iv. 19), enabled the parents to beget him. In how far these statements of the Scriptures give any directions for his own day, Paul explains by the fact, that they have a

(24) Which things contain an allegory : for these *women* are two covenants ; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. (25) ¹ Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is : for she is in bondage with her children. (26) But the Jeru-

¹ Many ancient authorities read *For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia.*

deeper meaning than the words as such seem to imply, 24 calling this deeper sense, according to the expressions current at that time, the allegorical. For according to this allegorical interpretation these two women represent the Old and the New Covenants, of which the former was established at Mount Sinai. This mountain is described as a mother that gives birth to servitude, since from this mountain the Covenant was given that was based on the law, and which obligated all its adherents to the fulfilment of the law that was here given, and hence demanded servitude to the law. The comparison of the first of these two women to the Sinaitic covenant of the law is based by the Apostle on the fact, that this woman was Hagar, who as a slave could give birth only to slaves, and hence must typically represent this servitude to the law. He finds confirmation of this interpretation in the fact, that the word Hagar in Arabic, i. e. in the language of Arabia, is used to 25 designate Mount Sinai. But then Hagar corresponds exactly to the present Jerusalem, which, as the capital and as the representative of the Jewish people, together with its children, i. e. all the adherents of the Old Covenant, is doing the service of slavery, since the unbelieving Israel is and remains enslaved to the Sinaitic law. In the fact that in this way the Old 26 Covenant is represented by modern Israel, Paul finds occasion to set up in contrast to it, not the New Covenant, but the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. Apoc. iii. 12; xxi. 2), i. e., the congregation of God which is already com-

salem that is above is free, which is our mother. (27) For it is written,

¹ Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not ;

Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not :

For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.

(28) Now ² we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

¹ Is. liv. 1.

² Many ancient authorities read *ye*.

pleted in the counsels of God, and which, because it is represented in Sarah, a free woman, is also free from the servitude of the law. As the earthly Jerusalem is the mother of unbelieving Judaism, so the heavenly Jerusalem is the mother of the adherents of the New Covenant, to which both the believing Israelites and Gentiles belong. These are accordingly all free of the law. But this interpretation of Sarah as referring to
 27 the New Covenant, Paul finds founded in Is. liv. 1., which, like all prophecies, must refer to the congregation of the time of redemption, because in this passage this congregation is addressed in a manner that manifestly refers to Sarah, as the unfruitful one, who does not give birth nor becomes pregnant. But she is exhorted to loud rejoicing because she, who has not conceived from a man, has more children than she who has conceived from a man. But this cannot take place in a natural and human way, but only through a divine miracle, as is proved by the case with Sarah, through the word of promise. And now this promise as a matter of fact is being fulfilled in this, that there are more children of the New Covenant than there are of the Old, since the former have become what they are by the fact that the gospel with its promises has worked faith in them and has made them children of the Jerusalem that is above,
 28 because the believers from among the Gentiles also belong to them. For this reason the readers are children of the promise after the manner of Isaac and are free-

(29) But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, so also it is now. (30) Howbeit what saith the scripture? ¹Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. (31) Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman.

V For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

¹ Gen. xxi. 10, 12.

born sons as he is. But in another feature of the history of the two sons of Abraham, Paul finds a significant lesson for the present time. In the mocking of 29 Ishmael (Gen. xxi. 9), the beginning of the persecution of Isaael by Ishmael was seen, and in this way in the time of the Apostle the unbelieving Jews persecute the believers of the New Covenant, who are born in accordance with the Spirit of God which operates in the gospel. But as Abraham by divine command obeyed the 30 word of Sarah (Gen. xxi. 10,—12), so unbelieving Judaism is not to become the master of the believers, but rather it is to be cast out and be excluded from the completion 81 of redemption. For this reason, and in this way the application of this Old Testament history concludes, that the readers are not the sons of a slave woman but of a free, and for this reason free and are heirs of the promise.

On this fact, that is proved from the Scriptures, the Apostle bases his exhortation to abide in their freedom from the law. For Christ has delivered us unto this 1 freedom by taking the law upon Himself in order to buy us free from servitude to the law (cf. iv. 4, 5). This is true of the Jews as it is of the former heathen. For if they had not been made free of the law through Christ, then naturally the Gentiles, too, who had been converted to the God of Israel and to the Mediator of redemption, whom He had sent, would be compelled to

(2) Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. (3) Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor

submit to this law. Accordingly they are to stand firm in this liberty, and not again permit themselves to be put under the yoke of servitude. For the Apostle has explained above, that they, in their pre-Christian lives, had none the less been the slaves of their idolatry, as the Jews had been bound to their law. Because the false teachers had persuaded them, that by the acceptance of circumcision, their relations to Christ would not be changed, but rather that they thereby would secure for themselves participation in the consummation of re-

2 demption that Christ has brought, Paul makes use of his entire personal authority in favor of that which he wants to say to them. If they are to be circumcised, as they have fortunately not yet been, then Christ is of no benefit to them. He can be the Mediator of redemption only for him who places his confidence in redemption solely upon Him, but not for the man who tries by any other means, such as circumcision and the acceptance of the law, to earn redemption. Evidently the false teachers had persuaded the Galatians that circumcision binds the native Jew to the observance of the entire law, but that in the case of those born as Gentiles this would not be demanded with the same strictness. By circumcision these would merely be incorporated into the chosen people, and would accept the law in principle, and many of the commands that were

8 vexatious to the Gentiles could be disregarded. Over against this Paul repeats solemnly what he had already declared to them on his last visit, namely, that every person who is circumcised is thereby bound to fulfil the entire law. He who in reality would fulfil this

to do the whole law. (4) Ye are ¹ severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law ; ye are fallen away from grace. (5) For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. (6) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision ; but faith

¹ Gr. *brought to nought*. Comp. Rom. 7. 2, 6 (in the Gr.)

obligation, and seeks thereby to be justified on the 4 basis of the law, no matter whether he can do this or not, has broken off his relation to Christ. For if Christ no longer secures justification, then the redemption that this justification brings can no longer come through Him. Both these things are given to us through grace, if Christ bestows them. But they have fallen out of the state of grace, into which the readers have been transferred by Christ, as soon as they make any attempt to earn their redemption themselves. But certainly, in view of their imperfect fulfilment of the law, they cannot think that they can do without grace. Paul and all true Christians are convinced that 5 they can be certain of the consummation of redemption in an altogether different way than they can, if they seek to gain it by the fulfilment of the law. This conviction is worked in them through the Spirit, so that through faith, which trusts in grace alone, they can without fear wait for the righteousness that has been given them by grace, and which had at all times been the basis of this hope as its consequence. Neither 6 circumcision, which the Galatians were regarding as indispensable for the consummation of redemption, nor the lack of it, can contribute anything to the living communion with Christ, into which this Spirit transfers them ; but faith alone can do this, if it is active through love. For in this case it evidently is the true faith, through which men receive the Holy Spirit, because only the latter can transfer us into the living

¹ working through love. (7) Ye were running well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth? (8) This persuasion *came* not of him that calleth you. (9) A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. (10) I have confidence to

¹ Or, *wrought*.

communion with Christ, which works in us a new life of love.

- 7 The Apostle asks who it was that had prevented them, who had set out so laudably on such a life independent of the law, from continuing in the same. The question is based on the presupposition that there had been no cause or right for such a departure, since this would have only the purpose of leading them away from obedience to the truth, which certainly, under no
- 8 circumstances, should be allowed. Only human persuasion could have induced them to do this, and such persuasion did not come from Him who works faith and calls men into the congregation, not through the arts of human oratory, but through the spiritual
- 9 power of the gospel. With the same saying that is given in 1 Cor. v. 6, Paul points to the fact, that even the slightest concession to false teachings destroys our whole Christian state. Until the present time they had yielded in that regard only in so far that they had introduced the Jewish festivals (iv. 10), which seemingly did not obligate them to anything. But they had thereby entered upon a way that would eventually and surely lead them to a servitude to the law, and to a
- 10 complete separation from Christ. The false teachers thought that they had already won the Galatians for their purposes. But, as far as he is concerned, he has the sincere conviction, that they will not think otherwise of this matter than he does, and will accordingly again turn from this dangerous way. This confidence is based on Christ, who has begun the good work in

you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded : but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. (11) But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted ? then hath the stumblingblock of the cross been done away. (12) I would that they that unsettle you would even ¹ go beyond circumcision.

¹ Gr. *mutilate themselves*.

them and will not leave it incomplete. But by this the guilt of those does not become less who are causing this confusion among them by representing to them that the acceptance of circumcision and of the law is something profitable, or at least something entirely without danger. Paul does not propose to accuse any particular person as the cause of this ; but whoever it may be, that person will be compelled to suffer the punishment which God inflicts for such doings. True, 11 it was cast up to him, that it was rather he who was confusing the congregation, as he, who also at times recommended circumcision, all at once takes such decided opposition to it and insists that nobody shall be circumcised. The charge was based on the fact that, in accordance with the principle, that everybody must remain in the same state in which his call found him, and that accordingly the circumcised is not to annul his circumcision (cf. 1 Cor. vii. 17, 18), he had maintained that the Jewish parents, too, who had become believers, should have their children circumcised (cf. Acts. xxi. 21). If this really were a "preaching of circumcision," then it could no longer be understood why he was still being persecuted by the hatred of the Jews. These were not able to forgive him one thing, namely, that he preached the cross of Christ as the only means of redemption, and in this way denied all redemptive significance to circumcision. But now this offense would be at once removed. If the opponents 12 call his justifiable insistence on the traditional Jewish

(13) For ye, brethren, were called for freedom ; only *use* not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. (14) For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as

¹ Lev. xix. 18.

custom as a "preaching of circumcision," then he, too, would be able to draw conclusions that the opponents would not accept, from the fact that, by drawing false consequences from his teachings, they were arousing people against him, showing that they were teaching contradictory doctrines. He could say that if they laid so much importance on circumcision, the purpose of which was to remove the natural sexual pollution in man, then they had better at once castrate themselves, because only in this way would they be perfectly freed from all sexual pollution, and thus show to the Galatians what his opponents really required.

It is only showing the opposite side of the preceding exhortation when the Apostle warns them against the abuse of their Christian freedom. For it certainly is
13 arousing the congregation against him, if anybody denies to them their freedom from the law, which was already founded in their call, since this latter does not take place on the basis of any legal obligation, but upon the ground of an absolute freedom from every obligation of the law. However they should not permit this freedom from the law to furnish the natural man any pretext for the exercise of his selfish impulses. On the contrary, this freedom demands a continual service, in which everybody, although not through the compulsion of law, but through love, seeks the good of others. With this the accusation that Christian freedom means lawlessness falls to the ground. For the entire law, is
14 fulfilled in the one statement concerning it which demands that we love our neighbor (Lev. xix. 18), as this

thyselves. (15) But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

(16) But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. (17) For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. (18) But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. (19) Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which

suffices fully to curb the natural selfishness and hold man to a fulfilment of the duty to his neighbor. The controversy concerning the law had already caused party passion, which hurts a neighbor or even seeks to de- 15 stroy him, and this had probably come from advocates of both sides. The Apostle only reminds them of the fact that this could lead to a complete rupture of the fraternal life of the communion. On the other hand, a walk entirely controlled by the divine Spirit prevents 16 absolutely the realization of that which the natural man and his flesh corrupted by sin desires, and to which every abuse of Christian freedom leads. For 17 the Spirit constantly offers opposition to the desires of the flesh, since these are at all times antagonizing each other, in order to prevent a man in any particular case from doing what he would do under the influence of the opposing power. For this reason the man who is determined on walking by the Spirit will never permit the flesh to carry out its purpose. But if we are impelled by the Spirit, then we are no longer under 18 the law, which at all times only demands and leaves to man the choice whether he could fulfil its demands or not; whereas the Spirit compels us from within to walk in accordance with His directions.

In order to show what is to be avoided as sins, there is no need of a law at all, since the deeds of the flesh 19 are manifest. The Apostle enumerates them just as

are *these*: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, ¹ parties, (21) envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I ² forewarn you, even as I did ² forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. (24)

¹ Gr. *heresies*.

² Or, *tell you plainly*.

they happen to occur to him, joining fornication with all
20 kinds of lustful uncleanness and excesses; to idolatry
he adds sorcery, and then mentions the different kinds
of passions that produce quarrels, jealousies and wrath,
such as party contentions, which lead to divisions of
21 all kinds in the life of the congregation, as in Rom. i.
29, envy and murder are joined together simply on
account of the similarity in the sound of the words, and
reference is made to the different ways in which these
two manifest themselves. Finally come the excesses
in eating and drinking and everything of this kind. Of
this the Apostle has spoken a great deal, and he states
it again, that deeds of this sort exclude us from the
kingdom of God. Accordingly his preaching of Chris-
tian freedom cannot possibly lead us to such sins. On
22 the other hand, the fruits of the Spirit are of a uniform
character, namely, a new Christian life, in which none
of these beautiful Christian virtues, which Paul again
mentions without any order of arrangement, can be
23 lacking. As there is no law that in its prohibitions is
directed against any of these things, then the freedom
of those who are moved by the Spirit can never come
into opposition with any expression of the will of God
in the law. The one thing of importance is this, that
those who are free of the law should be under the con-
24 trol of the Spirit and no longer under the flesh. For
those who belong to Christ have been baptized. But

GALATIANS

[V, 25-26]

And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

(25) If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.

(26) Let us not become vainglorious, ¹provoking one another, envying one another.

¹ Or, *challenging*.

they know that in baptism they have been transplanted into the living communion with Christ in which our old man is crucified with Him, and in which they have themselves in this way nailed to the cross their flesh together with its passions and desires. They can accordingly no longer be driven by their sinful flesh, and thereby an abuse of the Christian freedom is made impossible. If this nevertheless does occur, then the cause is not the fact that they are free from the law, but is a weakness of their Christian life in general, which must be remedied in a different way than by imposing a law, which cannot enforce its own fulfillment.

The concluding admonitions are based on the fact just discussed. If we have in baptism crucified our flesh, i. e. our old natural man, we then live only in the communion of life with Christ, in which the Spirit of Him 25 who has arisen is and works in us. We live only through the Spirit, and then we must also walk in accordance with the Spirit, i. e. all the activities of our life must be determined by the Spirit. How this is to take place the Apostle points out, in connection with the evil state of affairs that has been caused by the discussion of the law question in the congregation (cf. v. 15). In doing this 26 he has in mind both sides, and he directs that the one party is as little to seek an empty honor in its freedom from the law as the other is in its legal piety. The one party is not to challenge the other by emphasizing haughtily its own advantages. Nor are they to envy

VI Brethren, even if a man be overtaken ¹ in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness ; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (2) Bear

¹ Or, by.

each other ; which is not proper for brethren. The one party, who, by this, on the basis of the authority of the Apostle, or on account of their party, clung to the freedom from the law, could then no more be envious of the other in reference to the certainty of redemption, than, on the other hand, the latter, who had permitted themselves to be persuaded of the necessity of the observance of the law, could be envious of the former on account of their freedom. But the very wrongdoing of the one or of the other could easily give to the legally-minded man the desired opportunity triumphantly to prove to the other, that the failure to observe the law leads only to carnal freedom ; or to the one who was free from the law to show how little the acceptance of the law protects against this. But the fact that the one or the other would be caught in a sin before he could conceal or undo it, can only cause the Christians, because they are carried along their course by the Spirit, to bring such a person to rights again. But this can then be done only on the basis of this Spirit, who is characterized by mildness, and who will accordingly teach those who are impelled by the Spirit to do this in this really helpful and effective way. But this will be done most easily, also in that case when a sin committed by the other compels him to try to better the other, if he thinks of himself at all times, so that he himself may not be tempted as the one was who fell, especially because in all reformatory efforts pride and self-righteousness very easily come to the surface, and thus spoil everything. For everybody is subject to his own temptation, and is compelled to

GALATIANS

[VI, 3-4]

ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (3) For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. (4) But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard

carry as a heavy burden the weaknesses of his own nature, which excite him to these temptations. In this each one can help the other, by teaching him through patience and mildness to overcome the temptation and to make good again the sins that he has committed. In this way each one helps to carry the other's burden, because he knows that each one has to carry as much in his case as he has in the case of the other. Only in this way can the command of Christ to love each other be rightfully fulfilled; for without the consideration for and patient treatment of the weaknesses of the neighbors all efforts to show one's love will hurt instead of doing good, or will fail of their purpose. Of course this patience with one's neighbor always presupposes that we are at all times conscious of our own weakness and failings. For if a person imagines that he has only virtues, and is thus raised above another, 8 although Christian humility should teach everybody to be conscious of his unprofitableness before God, such a person intentionally stultifies himself, for his common sense must tell him that he who owes everything to the grace of God, can have no virtues of his own. To 4 this correct Christian self-estimate we can of course attain only when instead of constantly comparing ourselves with others, we measure our own doings by the measure of what we could do, or at any rate should do. In this case our self-praise will always be of modest proportion, because we cannot hide from ourselves the fact, that we have remained far behind what we should be; whereas if we, without such a self exami-

of himself alone, and not of ¹ his neighbor. (5) For each man shall bear his own ² burden.

(6) But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. (7) Be not de-

¹ Gr. *the other*. See Rom, 13. 8.

² Or, *load*.

nation, boast of only that in which we happen to be better than another, we easily begin to boast that we are
5 something special. For only through such self-examination shall we learn, with what great faults and weaknesses we are burdened, and how little reason we have to inquire into the infirmities of another, or to exalt our-
6 selves above him. In this injunction to pay no attention to the faults of the others but to regard our own, is not included the case in which he who teaches in the word of God is placed in contrast to him who is taught. In this case one must enter into communion with the other, the teacher must pass judgment on the pupil and the pupil measures himself by the word of the teacher; but in these cases, too, only in all good things. For the false teachers in Galatia have shown, that there are teachers by whom they should not be measured.

7 From this it appears, how necessary it is not to be led by others into errors, but to follow the Apostle, who has warned both sides against the same party sins. It would be mocking God, if a man, in exalting himself above his neighbor, should pretend, that God would ignore the faults to which such a man is himself subject, because, these faults are different from those of others. This God cannot grant, because He must repay a man according to his deeds, as the law of nature already shows, according to which a harvest exactly corresponds to the seed that is sown. With the same exactness our recompense is a reward or a punishment in accordance with our doings. The Apostle dwells upon

ceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (8) For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth

this figure, in order, in his last word, once more earnestly to warn his readers against the abuse of Christian freedom, which is never rightly exercised, unless the Christian, being driven by the Spirit, no longer gives room to the flesh, i. e. to his old natural being. This law of nature, according to which that which has been sown 8 is also reaped, is based not only on the consideration whether we have sown much or little, or whether this or that kind of seed has been scattered, but principally on the question, on what kind of a field it is on which we have sown ; because it is the greater or less degree of fruitfulness in a field which gives to the seed a greater or less power of development. In this way, too, the recompense for our doings is based on the character of the field in which we have sown, i. e., on the degree to which we permit the product of all our work and activity to be developed. But in the Christian there are only two kinds of land, his old natural self and the Spirit of a new life, which is given to him when in a state of grace. If he permits himself to be determined by the former, then his life is entirely sinful ; but if through the latter, then it is pleasing to God. But flesh as such is characterized by being corruptible, and he who sows in this field, can, if this becomes the final fate of the man, only end in his complete destruction. On the other hand, the Spirit, by His very nature, is life producing ; and he who sows in Him will inherit eternal life. In this there can be as little change as in that law of nature. But the Christian has no choice in the matter, as he can desire to do only that which is good and is worked by the Spirit, and his care is that

unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. (9) And let us not be weary in well-doing : for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. (10) So then, ¹ as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

(11) See with how large letters I ² write unto you with mine own hand. (12) As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised ; only that they may

¹ Or, *while*.

² Or, *have written*.

he never grows weary in well-doing. The harvest does not follow at once ; it will come at the return of Christ, who will repay everybody in accordance with his actions. For this reason they must patiently wait for this time, and we must never tire doing right, even if we must wait longer than we expected. We still have the time by right sowing to secure a good harvest. For this reason it is necessary to employ the time accorded us for the doing of good. Such doing of good is demanded of us in our dealings with all men ; but of course all the more in our dealings with our fellow-believers. We have all the more to do good to them as well as a much more abundant opportunity.

11 The postscript added by the Apostle's own hand, begins with a reference to the exceptionally large letters which he is making use of, in comparison with the manuscript of the amanuensis to whom he has dictated the rest of the letter. The tent-weaver was not practised in writing ; and all the greater is the significance of that which he states in his own handwriting in addition to the usual salutations. There is first of all a characterization of those false teachers, who called forth the entire letter, but of whom he at this place for the first time, directly states, that they aim at forcing the Galatians to be circumcised. This only those do who want in some way to attain recognition at the hands of their fellow Jews, and that too on account of

GALATIANS

[VI, 13-15]

not be persecuted ¹ for the cross of Christ. (13) For not even they who ² receive circumcision do themselves keep the law ; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. (14) But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through ³ which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (15) For nei-

¹ Or, *by reason of*.

² Some ancient authorities read *have been circumcised*.

³ Or, *whom*.

their flesh, and want to become favorites with these Jews, by incorporating the readers of this letter into the people of Israel through the circumcision in the flesh. Paul thinks that their false teachers hoped, that their confession of the crucified Messiah on whose account they had hitherto been persecuted, would be forgiven them. He bases this on the fact, that although as Jewish Christians they were circumcised, they had 13 not themselves accurately observed the law and accordingly could not ask for its adoption as a result of genuine zeal for the law. But rather they wished to have the Galatians circumcised, so that on the ground of their fleshly mutilation they could boast of how many proselytes they had again won for Judaism. Over against this Paul emphasizes his person strongly. For himself there is no other boasting than that which is based on the cross of Christ, the confessors of which 14 the heretical teachers would gladly cause to be forgotten through their proselyting work. On the basis of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, he boasts of his great advantage in having become a new man. For through this everything that is and is called the world has lost its importance for him, as though these things had with Christ been nailed to the cross, as he himself had been crucified with Christ (ii. 20) and thereby ceased to exist for the world. In his eyes neither the state of being circumcised nor that of being uncircumcised has the significance of any advantage of which one 15

ther is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new¹ creature. (16) And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

(17) Henceforth let no man trouble me ; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

¹ Or, *creation*.

could boast, but only the new creation through which a new man has come into existence in the Christian, who has with Christ been crucified as to his old man. They
16 will walk according to this rule if they carefully apply the teachings of this letter, and hence will boast only of the one advantage, which the cross of Christ affords us by making us new men. Upon such he prays for a blessing of that peace which we enjoy in the state of grace, and for the divine mercy, which averts every disturbance of this peace. Naturally he wishes these things not only for the Galatian or Gentile Christians. At the conclusion of the letter in which he had been compelled to contend so much against the Jewish Christians, he wants to emphasize the fact especially that the true believers among them, who seek first in Christ alone this salvation, constitute the true Israel, which has in truth become the property of God, and to these his good wishes also apply.

17 The Apostle closes with the request, that they would not cause him further trouble. On this the hope is based that the trouble which this letter has cost him would be sufficient to bring them back from the errors of their ways into which they had strayed. But any further straying away would cause him the same trouble. He accordingly can ask this of them ; for, in contrast to the false teachers who, through deceiving the Galatians, sought to buy themselves free from all sufferings, he carries on his body, on account of a confession of the crucified Christ, the marks of his

GALATIANS

[VI, 18]

(18) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

sufferings, and in other signs that have resulted from his work, the indications by which Christ has designated him as His servant. In the final blessing he expresses the wish, that the grace of Christ would accompany them in their new spiritual life, and in this way protect them from the dangers by which they were surrounded. In his friendly address, the letter, which in many of its parts had been full of rebukes, comes to a close characterized by warm love, and he seals it with an Amen. 18

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

I Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are ¹at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus : (2) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Some very ancient authorities omit *at Ephesus*.

1 Paul here describes himself as a man who, through the will of God, has been called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and thereby indicates that this is not a personal letter, but has been written in his official capacity. But as by this divine will he had been specially called to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, it is evident that those to whom he addressed this letter are believers from among the Gentiles. For this reason he also describes them as such who are not only dedicated to God, as was the people of Israel, through its election, but at the same time are believers, whose confidence of redemption is based on Jesus Christ, and who accordingly, through this faith alone, have become partakers in the relation to God which is characteristic of Israel. According to the evidence of the oldest manuscripts, the place where the Gentile Christians lived, to whom Paul here writes, was not mentioned in particular. The man who carried the letter would know to which congregations he should read it, or where to leave a copy. But as it was in later times regarded as being sent especially to Ephesus, where the ecclesiastical headquarters of Asia Minor were to be found, it is clear that the Epistle was originally a circular letter, and intended for all the congregations in Asia Minor, which **2** had been gathered from among the Gentiles. The

EPHESIANS

[I, 3-5

(3) Blessed be ¹the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before ²him in love: (5) having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself,

¹Or, *God and the Father*. See Rom. 15. 6. marg.

²Or, *him*: *having in love foreordained us*.

salutation with which the letter begins is the one usually employed by Paul (cf. Rom. i. 7).

The Epistle begins with a praise of God in general **3** for His redemptive acts. For He, who is at the same time the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ already in the heavenly world, where he sits enthroned, i. e., in the supermundane council of redemption, has blessed us with every blessing that can be achieved through His Spirit, and has done this in Christ, who, as His Son and the Mediator of our redemption, was destined to be the One in whom this blessing was to be bestowed upon us. It is only another expression for this fact, that **4** constitutes the deepest and unshaken foundation of our entire salvation, when it is said that God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. For in and with this Mediator of redemption a company of those had been appointed from eternity, who through Him were to become partakers of redemption, and to whom all the members of the congregation know that they belong. Thereby we know that we are destined for this, that the consecration to God that has been given us in our election is to prove itself at the end of days before the judgment-seat of God, preserved from all pollution. For this is the goal of all the manifestations of grace that are intended for us in the counsel of God, and which are to be imparted to us through the Spirit. But this goal could be attained only because God has **5** predestinated us in His love to be accepted as His

according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) to the praise of the glory of his grace, ¹ which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved : (7) in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, (8) ² which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, (9) making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him (10) unto a dispensation of the fulness of the ³ times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things ⁴ in the heavens, and

¹ Or, *wherewith he endued us.*
² Gr. *seasons.*

³ Or, *wherewith he abounded.*
⁴ Gr. *upon.*

children, through Christ, as our Mediator, and that not on account of any virtues on our part, but solely because it was pleasing to Him to realize in us His divine redemptive will. For this reason our heavenly blessing in the divine counsel already redounds to the glory of the wonderful greatness of His grace, on account of which the Apostle had begun to glorify God.

But God as a matter of fact and in the present time
 7 has already given us grace in Him who is the highest
 object of His love, since in Him we have redemption
 through His blood, which consists in the forgiveness of
 all our transgressions; for in this the riches of the
 8 free and undeserved grace is shown. And He has also
 9 made this grace more than abundant in us by giving us all
 possible knowledge and understanding of the secret of
 His redemptive will. For He has made this known to
 us entirely in accordance with the counsel which He had
 taken in His own heart with reference to that which He
 would in time establish, when the moment would
 10 have come, in which all courses of time preparatory for
 the completion of redemption would have passed by.
 For then all the heavenly and earthly spiritual beings,
 who by sin have been separated from each other and
 from God, are again to be united in Christ as their cen-
 tral point of unity. This final goal of the divine redemp-

EPHESIANS

[I, 11-14]

the things upon the earth ; in him, *I say*, (11) in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will ; (12) to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who ¹had before hoped in Christ : (13) in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the ²gospel of your salvation,—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, (14) which is an

¹ Or, *have*.

² Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

tive will has been made known in the work of salvation already begun by Christ. The Apostle can depict this from its different sides as these appear in the two parts of Christianity to which the manner in which the readers were addressed in the opening salutation already significantly pointed. For he and the members of his people had already attained in Christ to the possession of re- 11 demption that had long ago been intended for them, not because of any merit on their part, but solely because He who does everything that is necessary for carrying out the plan of redemption according to the counsel of His will, had determined that it should be 12 done thus. In this way they, who before had already set their hopes on the Messiah, are to redound to the praise of His glory, because God has in their case proved that He keeps His promises faithfully.

It was otherwise in the case of the Gentiles, to whom this letter is addressed. These had heard the word of truth, which the Jews possessed already in the Old 18 Testament, first in the gospel concerning the deliverance from destruction that is offered to them in Christ and which had long since been offered to the people of Israel. And if they have now become believers in this word, then in their case the living communion with Christ had been sealed, i. e. had been made absolutely certain, through the Spirit that had been given them in baptism. For this Spirit, as the first part of the prom- 14

earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of *God's* own possession, unto the praise of his glory.

(15) For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is ¹among you, and ²the love which *ye show* toward all the saints, (16) cease not to give thanks for you,

¹ Or, *in*.

² Many ancient authorities omit *the love*.

ise, was at the same time the guarantee that sealed for them the entire redemption that had been promised to Israel until the time when they would at last take possession of it, which naturally can take place only with the final deliverance from all the consequences of sin. In this way they too are to redound to the praise of the glory of God, who has revealed Himself to them in His inscrutable mercy, so that now together with the believers from among the Jews they must join in with the glorification of the Apostle.

- 15 At this point the Apostle begins the letter proper, as he is accustomed to do, with thanksgivings for what God has done to his readers. Because the Gentiles through their faith have been transplanted into the state of grace, he in company with all of whom he had heard renders thanks to God at all times, that the confidence in redemption based upon Jesus and the love toward all the saints have taken a firm hold in the readers. From this it is apparent that the letter was not originally addressed to the congregation in Ephesus, whose faith and good works he knew personally from having lived there for three years, but to Gentile Christian congrega-
- 16 tions of whose faith he had only heard. For this reason too he cannot enter more fully on the details of what had been bestowed upon them. He merely draws attention to the fact, that he never fails whenever he renders thanksgiving to God, to include them in his prayers, in order that a constantly more perfect knowledge of that redemption, which has been given them in their faith,

EPHESIANS

[I, 17-19]

making mention *of you* in my prayers ; (17) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him ; (18) having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, (19) and what the ex-

may be bestowed upon them. He then turns to God, as 17 the One who has made Christ Jesus to be our divine Lord, in order through Him to realize this entire redemption, and to our Father, who according to His fatherly love intends to have participation in the glory that is His own. He prays to God, to give to the Gentiles, who have only through the gospel learned to know the true God, of whom they had before known nothing, what they may yet need for such knowledge. But this is the Holy Spirit who, because He is a Spirit whose peculiar possession is all wisdom and revelation, is also exclusively able to reveal to them the knowledge of God and 18 of His redemptive plans, in which all wisdom consists. He prays that God would give them, through this Spirit, that their spiritual eyes be enlightened to know of what character the hope is which their call through God holds out to them ; how great the riches of glory is, which is characteristic of the possession of the redemption that is intended for them, because it is to be bestowed upon them in company with the saints of the Old and of the New Covenant. But for this there is special need of enlightenment as to how immeasurably great the power of God is, which can realize such a redemption in us, who believe. But this faith in its essence is nothing more than the confidence in redemption which is measured in accordance with the manifestations of power that have already been made by God. But God has already shown in Christ such a manifestation of

ceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might (20) which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, (21) far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this ¹ world, but also in that which is to come: (22) and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, (23) which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

¹ Or, *age*.

His power, as can proceed only from the storehouse
 20 of His strength, when he awakened Him from the dead and raised Him to His right hand by having Him take His seat thereon in the heights of heaven. The greatness of the manifestations of God's power is
 21 measured by the greatness of His exaltation. For Christ has thereby been highly exalted over all the orders of heavenly spiritual beings, whatever be their names, as also above everything that is called exalted on earth in this world period as also in the next, when
 22 in it this exaltation shall attain its highest perfection. Already has been fulfilled in Him what Ps. viii. 7 says
 23 of the Messiah, namely, that all things have been put under His feet, i. e. have been put into servitude to Him. And He whom God has so highly exalted has been also appointed by the Father to be the Head of the congregation, who is to be exalted over everything therein. The church is His body which is organically connected with Him as its Head. In this way then the congregation here complements Him, whereby His essence is first perfectly fulfilled, since there can never be a head without a body or a body a head. But the Apostle points out what it means to be the head of such a body by stating that it is Christ, who first in all of the members manifests that which makes them such in the full-

EPHESIANS

[II, 1-8]

II And you *did he make alive*, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, (2) wherein ye once walked according to the ¹course of this world, according to the prince of the ²powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience ; (3) among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the ³mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest :

¹ Gr. *age*.

² Gr. *power*.

³ Gr. *thoughts*.

est sense of the word and in that way fulfils their essence, as His is fulfilled through them.

This manifestation of His power, which God has demonstrated by raising Christ from the dead and exalting Him, the readers can themselves recognize in the experience of redemption which they have already personally made themselves. They, too, were once dead, 1 through their trespasses and sins, in which they walked while they were yet heathen. And these were not a few accidental sins of omission ; but in their entire life they had been determined in their career by their hostility to God that is characteristic of mankind as such. In this world, and in the age that corresponds to 2 it in character, the Devil rules, the prince over all the powers of darkness, who live in the air that surrounds the earth, and whose influences men breathe as they do the air. The spirit who proceeds from these, and who at that time completely controlled them, is best recognized by this, that he is now working among the sons of disobedience, i. e. in the Gentile world, which defies God and His gospel. That life, led under the influence of such powers, must result in their spiritual and eternal death, is a self-evident matter. But with this is 3 not meant that the Apostle and the people of his nation were at one time in a better condition. They, too, had their conversation in the midst of these sons of darkness. And if, because they are members of the chosen people they did not belong to the peculiar king-

—(4) but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love where-
with he loved us, (5) even when we were dead through our
trespasses, made us alive together ¹ with Christ (by grace have
ye been saved), (6) and raised us up with him, and made us

¹ Some ancient authorities read *in Christ*.

dom of the Devil, as the Gentiles did, they nevertheless
walked after the desires of their own flesh, i. e. in their
sinful lusts, which are characteristic of the sin that con-
trols the flesh, because they at all times did what the
natural man and his thoughts commanded them to do.
For this reason they, no less than the Gentiles, had
fallen under the wrath of God, although actually only
according to what they were by nature, and not accord-
ing to what the grace of God and their call to be the
4 chosen people had intended for them. The Apostle in-
terrupts himself, because he intends later on to speak
not only of what the believers from among the Gentiles
have experienced, but of the experience of *all* believers.
God, who was rich in mercy, could not look upon this
misery of the Gentiles and of the Jews, who were
5 under the same condemnation. For this reason He,
on account of the great love with which He loved them,
and at a time when they all through their trans-
gressions had evidently become the objects of con-
demnation and death, showed in their case the same
manifestation of His power that He once did in the
case of Christ. For, after He had through baptism
transferred them into the communion of love with
Christ, He has with Christ also made them alive again.
In a jubilant tone the Apostle here inserts the exclama-
tion: By grace have ye been saved. For they, who
have been delivered from spiritual death, can now no
6 longer be subject to eternal death. But the Apostle
must yet say more. In the living communion with
Christ, who through His resurrection has been ex-

EPHESIANS

[II, 7-10]

to sit with him in the heavenly *places*, in Christ Jesus : (7) that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus : (8) for by grace have ye been saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; (9) not of works, that no man should glory. (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.

alted to heaven, they, too, have been awakened and have also received their places of abode in the heights of heaven ; because in their communion they already now, though only spiritually, share in His heavenly 7 life. But this miraculous deed God has performed in their case, in order that, in the ages that come with this deed, i. e. in the Christian era that has now begun, as also in the period of consummation in the future, He could show forth the inexhaustible riches of His grace in Christ. Through Him the grace of God in all the effects that result from the fundamental act of His grace are to be poured out over them. For this fact 8 remains, that it is grace through which they have been saved, and only through that faith which bases its confidence alone on this grace. This transformation of their condition in nowise comes from themselves, but is exclusively a gift of God, who has worked faith in them, on the basis of which He makes them alive in the living communion with Christ. It does not come from 9 works ; for faith is no product of our own. But it is the divinely wrought surrender of all claim to personal merit or work, which makes all self-praise, in view of God's working, impossible. For this new Christian 10 life is not theirs, but is exclusively His work, which God has accomplished, since He has, as it were, created them anew in the living communion with Christ. It could perhaps be said that this new creation took place

(11) Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; (12) that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the

as a result of good works; but such works we have not done, but He has prepared them, and has only new created us that we should walk in them, and no longer, as formerly, in sin and its lusts.

- 11 If the readers have, in the manifestation of God's power just described, learned to know the greatness of the grace which they have experienced, this grace finds its culmination now in the reception of the Gentiles into the redemptive communion of Israel. They need only remember what they once had been. Even if the Jews from a moral point of view were on the same level with themselves, they themselves were nevertheless heathens in the flesh, i. e. they lacked the circumcision which guarantees to Israel as the people of the Covenant the promised redemption. And if, as is a matter of fact, they are in scorn called by the Jews, "the Foreskin," i. e. the uncircumcised, this did not amount to anything, because the Jews were themselves called the Circumcision only on account of a rite that had been externally performed by the hands on their flesh, although by their disobedience they had lost the real
- 12 advantages of the circumcision. But, as a matter of fact, the Gentiles at that time, when they were total strangers to the promised Redeemer, were estranged from the national life of Israel, in which God's will was the only law, as this was originally intended to have been the case with all mankind. They were strangers to the covenants that had been made with the patriarchs, in which redemption had been promised to their de-

EPHESIANS

[II, 18-16]

promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (13) But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. (14) For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, (15) having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances ; that he might

scendants. Accordingly they lived as heathen without hope, as this alone is founded on the promise, and without any God like Him whom Israel worshipped as their Lord and King, in a world that was estranged from God and separated from Israel in their election. But now, since they had entered into the living com- 13
munion with Christ, they who were at one time far distant, as the Apostle says, with a reference to Is. lvii. 19, are now brought near in the bloody death of Christ. For He is the author of the unity between the Jews and 14
the Gentiles, as He has formed an organic body out of the two elements that were apart in the pre-Christian world.

In order to do this, it was first necessary for Him to put away that which separated them. For the law, which separated Israel from the surrounding peoples by a strict method of life, had produced an insurmountable wall of partition between the two parts of the pre-Christian world, namely, the enmity, which arose from the fact, that the Jews despised the Gentiles as the uncircumcised, and for this reason were themselves hated by the latter. This enmity can be put 15
aside only if the law, which consists exclusively of commands formulated in literal injunctions, be abrogated. This had been done, as Christ has in His flesh shed that blood which makes all people free from sin, and has in this way abrogated the law, which made the state of being pleasing to God exclusively dependent on the

create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; (16) and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (17) and he came and¹ preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: (18) for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. (19) So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-

¹ Gr. *brought good tidings of peace.* Comp. Mt. 11. 5.

fulfilment of its commands. And this had to be done, since in the fundamental redemptive act of God, which has been discussed above, the Gentiles have not been transformed into Jews, but rather these two, inwardly diverged classes of human beings, in the living communion with Christ have both been transformed into a new kind of a man, whereby, naturally, peace has been
16 established between them. In the same way the establishment of this peace between them demands that the reconciliation of both with God, from whom they were separated by sin, could not take place in the case of the Jews through some atoning means of the law, and in the case of the Gentiles, through some other and new means, but in both cases in the one and the same body, namely, in the body of Christ. For on the cross He fully brought about the reconciliation by having removed in His atoning death the enmity which separated
17 God from the sinful world. Now Christ could come through His messengers and declare the same joyful message of the peace which He had established be-
18 tween God and mankind alike to both the Gentiles and to the Jews, because both of them, solely through Him, who had reconciled them with God, became partakers of the one Spirit, who makes them sure of the fatherly love of God, and they all have free access to the Father.
19 Because, then, they have in the same way attained to the same redemption, they no longer stand as stran-

citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, (20) being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; (21) in whom ¹ each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy ² temple in the Lord; (22) in whom ye also are builded together ³ for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

¹ Gr. *every building*.

² Or, *sanctuary*.

³ Gr. *into*.

gers over against the Old Testament people of God with its consecration to God, or, at best, as sojourners, who are only by sufferance permitted to dwell among them. They are their fellow-citizens, and as the Israelites are a family of God. They have become members of the household of God, and together with all the members of the old people of God, in their consecration to the Lord, they belong to a new house of God, 20 which is built on the foundation of the Apostles and the prophets, the corner-stone of which is Jesus Christ Himself. For the Apostles themselves have laid the foundation for this structure, through their proclamation concerning Christ; as also the prophets of the Old Testament had done, since their predictions affirmed, that He was the Mediator of the redemption, who had been appointed for this purpose in the counsel of God. But 21 Christ is the corner-stone, because only in the living communion with Him, this structure, if it is through this communion joined together into a unity, grows into a temple, whose consecrated character is based on the communion with Christ. If they then stand 22 in this living communion with Christ, they also, together with all the other congregations, will be built up together to become a habitation of God, who Himself in the Spirit, which they have received in the living communion with Christ, makes His dwelling-place with them.

III For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,—(2) if so be that ye have heard of the ¹ dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward ; (3) how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, (4) whereby,

¹ Or, *stewardship*.

- 1 While in other cases the Apostle's thanksgiving for what God has done for his congregations is directly connected with the petition for that of which they are yet in special need, we find in this case, when he is writing to a large circle of Gentile Christian congregations, a solemn prayer for the Gentile Christians as such, the import of which he tries to impress upon his readers by a reference to his call as the Apostle of the Gentiles. For Paul, especially for the good of the former Gentiles, and for the purposes of building them up to become the abiding place of God in the Spirit, has been put into chains; for the work that he had been commanded to do among the Gentiles had aroused that hatred of the Jews against him which had eventually brought him into captivity in Rome. In this Paul presupposes, that the readers, who were not yet personally known to him, had heard of the divine arrangement, according to which, in his call, not only the divine grace that is given to all Christians had been bestowed upon him also, but further, a grace especially intended for them, as he had on that occasion also been called to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. This grace
- 8 consisted first of all in the fact, that there had been revealed to him the mystery of the divine counsel of redemption, concerning the realization of which by the reception of the Gentiles into the redemptive communion of Israel he had just spoken in such detail in
- 4 this letter. In this they, if they read this account, can learn his understanding of this mystery that had been

EPHESIANS

[III, 5-7]

when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ ; (5) which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit ; (6) *to wit*, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the ¹ gospel, (7) whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See Mt. 4. 23. marg.

concluded in Christ. For this divine counsel of redemption was a mystery, because it had at this time not yet been revealed among other generations of the sons of men, as it was being revealed now, when the Spirit 5 was teaching men to understand the plan through its realization. First of all to those whom Christ had sent out as His messengers and whom He had enlightened as His prophets through His Spirit, so that they were now by God separated and consecrated for His special service. It is true that the Old Testament prophets had already hoped for a participation in redemption on the part of the Gentiles, but only then when these would have connected themselves with the people of Israel, in whom this redemption was first to be 6 realized. But now it was a fact, that the Gentiles in the living communion with Christ had become immediate participants in the redemption promised to Israel and co-partakers of the body of Christ, which the congregation constitutes, and fellow-partakers in the promises of the consummation of redemption, solely through preaching of the gospel, through which faith has been awakened in them.

But Paul had become the preacher of this gospel in 7 accordance with the gift which had been imparted to him in the grace that had been bestowed upon him in his appointment as Apostle of the Gentiles. Only through the working of the Divine omnipotence could

according to the working of his power. (8) Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to ¹preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; (9) and to ²make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; (10) to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places* might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, (11) according to the

¹ Gr. *bring good tidings of the, &c.* Comp. ch. 2. 17.

² Some ancient authorities read *bring to light what is.*

8 this grace have been given him. For in his case, as the former persecutor of the congregation, who on this account felt himself among all those called to consecration unto the Lord to be the least worthy of this grace, it was first necessary that his hostile resistance be overcome. Only in this way could he be enabled to proclaim to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, whom he had in the past been persecuting. Only now was
9 he in a condition to enlighten all men in reference to whatever pertained to the establishment of this mystery, which was already hidden in the plans of God as long as there have been world ages. For this plan had already been decided upon when He created the universe; since the world could not have been created, if in this counsel of redemption the guarantee had not already been given, that the creation of the world
10 would also lead to the goal which God had appointed for it. But it was not hidden in God in order to remain hidden there, but that it should be proclaimed in the presence of all celestial spiritual beings, no matter how highly exalted they might be. For in the church, in which this redemptive counsel is being realized, they could recognize the manifold wisdom of God, who is never in want of ways and means to carry out His counsel to its ultimate goal. This manifestation cor-
11 responded exactly to the purpose which belonged to

EPHESIANS

[III, 12-15]

¹ eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord :
(12) in whom we have boldness and access in confidence
through ² our faith in him. (13) Wherefore I ask that ³ ye
may not faint at my tribulations for you, which ⁴ are your
glory.

(14) For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
(15) from whom every ⁵ family in heaven and on earth is

¹ Gr. *purpose of the ages.*
⁴ Or, *is.*

² Or, *the faith of him.*
⁵ Gr. *fatherhood.*

³ Or, *I.*

those world times in which it was yet perfectly hid-
den, but which God has actually carried out in Christ
Jesus, by exalting Him to be our Lord, so that now the
time has come for the proclamation of this counsel. 12
For on Him, the exalted Lord, alone is founded the fact
that we have the confidence that is characteristic of all
Christians, through which we in our prayer—with
which also the prayer of the Apostle for the Gentiles is
united—confidently and because of the certainty of sal-
vation based upon Christ come into the presence of God. 18
On account of this high office of his, as the Apostle to the
Gentiles, Paul constantly petitions God, that He would
not permit him to lose courage in all the oppressions
which he endures for the sake of the Gentile Christians,
and which are in reality an honor to them, since not
for a slight cause has Christ put him into chains.

Only here does the Apostle with purpose takes up
again the words with which he began to speak concern-
ing his Apostolic mission to the Gentiles, in order to tell 14
them what his purpose had been in doing this, namely,
that he, the Apostle of the Gentiles, bent his knees be-
fore the Father, whose love had made him certain that
his prayers for the Gentile Christians would be heard.
The Apostle bases this certainly on the fact that from 15
Him all fatherhood has its name in heaven, since the
angels too are called the children of God, and upon
earth, where every generation is called after its father.

named, (16) that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; (17) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (18) may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, (19) and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.

Hence his purpose is to indicate that this paternal love of God, of which he speaks, is the original image and fountain-head of all fatherly love in heaven and upon earth. The object of this petition, however, is not this, that their Christianity be perfected in this or in that point, because it did not need this, but only that
16 they be strengthened in it with might, as only God in accordance with the riches of His supermundane glory knows how to strengthen through His Spirit, naturally in reference to the inner man, about the well-being of which alone the Apostle is solicitous. But this can be expressed also in this form, that Christ Himself dwells permanently in our hearts through this Spirit, who is also the Spirit of God, through faith, which confides in Him and wants to get all things from
17 Him. These then would on their part be rooted and established firmly in Him and thereby in love, which
18 is His essence, for their entire Christian life, wherein the rightly strengthening consists for which the Apostle has been petitioning for them. Only in this way can they fully reach the condition of all who are consecrated to God, and with whom they are united by this love, to seize upon the love of Christ in its entire ex-
19 tent. This is what the Apostle intended to say; but he interrupts himself, in order to correct himself to the effect, that all such knowledge of the love of Christ in

EPHESIANS

[IV, 1

(20) Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (21) unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto ¹all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

IV I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk

¹ Gr. *all the generations of the age of the ages.*

reality transcends all our power to know, and hence is possible only if we experience it through His indwelling within us in the constantly increasing strength and firmer establishment of our Christian life in loving. For this reason their ability of knowing the love of Christ at bottom consists in their being filled with it unto the entire fulness of the love with which God Himself is filled, because this constitutes His essence as it does that of Christ. This seems to be an extravagant prayer. But the prayer closes with the glorification of Him, who can do more and even inexpressibly more than we can ask or can represent to ourselves as 20 the object of such petitions, according to the power of His Spirit, who is already operative within us. Hence God should receive the honor due Him in the congrega- 21 tion, in which this redemptive plan is being realized, and later, too, when all things have been comprehended in Christ as the central unity, in Him alone, until the time of all generations of mankind which belong to the world time consisting of endless world times, i. e. into all eternity. This prayer the Apostle seals with Amen.

The Apostle at this point discloses the real purpose 1 of his letter, which is to inculcate harmony. He again looks back to that which he has said concerning his captivity. For the same Lord who has cast him into fetters, also demands, that he through such exhortations fulfil his calling among the Gentile Christians. But what he has in mind to exhort them about has been fully

worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, (2) with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; (3) giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling;*

prepared by what preceded, the central thought of which certainly had been this, that the Gentiles had through free grace been called to the salvation destined for Israel. But they can walk worthily of this calling only if, in the consciousness of the fact that they have earned nothing of themselves but owe all things to grace, they think
2 humbly of themselves, and in this humility do not permit also the weaknesses of their neighbors to provoke them to anger, but remain even tempered. But if they further remember that they commit the same transgressions against their neighbors, as these do against them, then in the case of other wrongs that may be inflicted upon them they will bear these even when often repeated with long suffering, not on account of weakness or cal-
8 culation, but through love, which hopes all things and patiently bears all things. Only in this way can a Christian unity be brought about, which encircles the congregation as with a firm cord and binds the several members together. But the Apostle demands that they should earnestly strive for this, so that the unity of the Spirit, who is operative in the congregation, be preserved and the inroads of every evil spirit foreign to
4 the congregation be checked in unison. For as the congregation is one body, thus, as is the case with every body, it can have only one spirit, as it was also only one hope, on the basis of which they had been called into the congregation, when the message of redemption had awakened in them the faith in Him who had purchased this salvation for them and had promised the consumma-

EPHESIANS

[IV, 5-8]

(5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. (7) But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (8) Wherefore he saith,

When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive,
And gave gifts unto men.

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 18.

tion of the same. For this reason, too, there is only one Lord, who is worshipped in the congregation as the 5 Mediator of redemption, only one faith in Him, which is confessed in it, and only one baptism through which men are brought into the living communion with Him and in 6 which they receive this one Holy Spirit. Finally, the Apostle points to the fact that they have only one God, who is the Father of all believers, whose exaltation over all does not separate Him from them, but only brings it about, that He works through all the members of the congregation and dwells in them all. From this 7 it naturally follows, that the unity of the congregation is not based on the homogeneity of its members. It is true that the grace of God has been given to all of them; but just as in the case of the Apostle, when he was called to become a Christian and the same time also received the grace of his Apostolic office, thus, and in connection with the call of every member of the congregation, a special mission has also been given him, in which the special grace of God has been imparted to him. But these missions are of very different kinds, according to the measure of the gift, which Christ brings to every one confessing Him in baptism in order to equip him for the service in His congregation. For God does not ask for a mission for which He does not at the same time bestow the gift, and does this through Christ, as Ps. lxxviii. 19 says. In this passage, which is very freely reproduced, as interpreted by the Apostle, God has said, that He 8 who has gone up on high had given gifts to the men

(9) (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended ¹into the lower parts of the earth? (10) He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. (11) And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto

¹ Some ancient authorities insert *first*.

who through the faith that had been worked in them had been won as His booty. Paul expressly explains, that this one who is described by the Psalmist as having gone on high, because only a being originally
 9 of a celestial nature could ascend upwards, must before this have first descended to lower regions, which posi-
 10 tion the earth occupies over against the heaven. But in the same way He, who in this way descended must have ascended above all the heavens in order, by the distribution of the gifts He there received there, with which He fills these who are His, to bring to a conclusion the work that He had begun with His descending.
 11 It is true that He has appointed only certain members of the congregation to be Apostles i. e. founders of congregations; others to be prophets, i. e. those who under the inspiration of the Spirit declare new truths or with the power of God move the hearts; others to be Evangelists, who go about with the message of redemption as missionaries; others to be shepherds in the different congregations, who feed them with the true
 12 teachings of the word. But the call of the bearers of these special gifts is only to put the saints in general, i. e. all the individual members of the congregation, in the condition, that each one can render his special service in the upbuilding of the body of Christ, i. e. in the advancement of congregational life in general. The goal, however, of this service, for which each member of the congregation receives his own special gift, is

the building up of the body of Christ : (13) till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ : (14) that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error ; (15) but ¹ speaking truth in love, may grow up in all

¹ Or, *dealing truly*.

nevertheless in each case a uniform one, namely, the 13 attainment by each and every one of the one faith which the congregation confesses and the unity of knowledge that is connected with this faith. For this knowledge, with the prayer for which the Apostle had begun his letter, is a knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, who has transmitted to us all the blessings of the redemption that the Father had intended for us. Only then the congregation becomes a mature man ; and the measure of this ripeness of age is none other than that which the Apostle had above pointed out as the goal of the indwelling of Christ, according to which the entire fulness of God, which dwells in Christ, is now also to take its habitation in the congregation. Until this object has been realized, all these members who, through the possession of special gifts have been made capable of doing so, must labor together that we no longer, like immature children, be swayed and driven 14 about like a wave by every wind of doctrine. When this takes place, it is caused by the dice game that men play with the truth, by claiming one thing as truth to-day and to-morrow something else, according as the dice falls. For this is the method by which errors deceitfully cheats men, namely, by claiming that their various notions are the truth. But the congregation can be edified only by the confession of the truth, when those who hear and those who teach, bound to- 15 gether with fraternal love, grow out of the age of im-

IV, 16-18] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

things into him, who is the head, *even* Christ ; (16) from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together ⁵through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in *due* measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

(17) This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, (18) being darkened in their understanding, alienated

¹ Gr. *through every joint of the supply.*

maturity into a constantly closer union with the Head,
16 Christ. From Him all true growth of the body of the congregation must proceed. And it also comes from Him, that this body, as it were is fitly framed and joined together, as the different members in the human body are by the fact that they come into contact with each other at the joints, each rendering service to the other. For each member of the congregation, according to the gift which he has received from Christ, the Head, must co-operate in the upbuilding of the whole body of the congregation; and to do this in that love, of which Paul had spoken in the beginning of his exhortation, stating that by it the harmony of the congregation and thereby the unity of the Spirit that actuates the congregation, is preserved.

If the walk of the Christian is to be worthy of his call,
17 he needs an exhortation to a complete renewal of life. The Apostle accompanies what he has to say on this subject with a solemn appeal, by the power and the authority of the Lord, that they should no longer walk as the heathen still walk. For this walk is based on this fact, that their natural reason, which ought to be the means for appropriating all things concerning the divine, through their having been turned in their
18 thoughts from God and allied to that which is vain, has itself become empty and void. From a source which itself was no longer able to receive any of the

EPHESIANS

[IV, 19-21]

from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; (19) who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, ¹to work all uncleanness with ²greediness, (20) But ye did not so learn Christ; (21) if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in

¹ Or, *to make a trade of*.

² Or, *covetousness*. Comp. ch. 5. 8; Col. 3. 5.

light of knowledge of divine things, their mind could no longer receive any light and all that could point out for them the right way had become darkened. The fundamental reason for this was indeed the whole character of its being, which was antagonistic to the life of God. For God communicates His own life in His revelation. But they had no longer recognized Him in His revelation; not because they lacked the capability of doing this, but because their heart, in its tendency toward that which is vain, was hardened toward all the impulses that proceed from the divine revelation. For he who refuses to be guided by the divine revelation loses the capability of appropriating it. This is plainly shown by the character of their life. For as they hardened their heart overagainst the impulses 19 of the divine revelation, they also lost all feeling for any rebuke of conscience; and through the indifference that had thus been produced they gave themselves up to all excesses and voluptuous uncleanness for the purpose of gain. Paul sees in the practise of prostitution as a business, which no longer seeks to satisfy its own lusts, but unites with the one heathen cardinal vice of fornication the vice of greed, the acme of all the horrors of the sins of the heathen world. Thus, i. e. the fact 20 that such a life could be the outcome of the instruction they had received, they have not learned to know Christ, who had at all times been the center of their Christian instruction. He has indeed not himself preached Christ to them, but he can presuppose, that 21

IV, 22-24] *WEISS'S COMMENTARY*

him, even as truth is in Jesus: (22 that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit: (23) and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and put on the new man, ¹ that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

¹ Or, *that in after God, created, &c.*

they have heard this proclamation of Christ and have been instructed in the truth, in which the image of the historical Christ has been held before them and they have
22 been taught to receive from Him all the rules and the motives for their actions. But then they have also must have been taught, since their former way of life had been based on religico-ethical corruption, to lay aside the old man, which naturally suffers destruction in consequences of its own lusts. For this is the deception of these lusts, that they picture to men the highest gratification and yet only bring their destruction. It is true, that in baptism this old man has been killed; but it is never-
23 theless necessary continually to put aside that which may be left of him in our hearts, and thus be rejuvenated through the Holy Spirit that is given to our natural reason. For the Spirit alone can fill reason with new contents and at the same time give it strength
24 to carry on this process of rejuvenation and to complete it. In this way they are at all times to be putting on the new kind of a man that has become a living power within them through baptism, wherein man is created after the image of God in a state of perfect satisfaction to God and of consecration to Him, in harmony with the truth, i. e. the true essence and will of God. This putting on consists in the constant restoration of those features that are still lacking.

The Apostle in entering upon a description of the fundamental characteristics of the new life, shows what is

EPHESIANS

[IV, 25-29]

(25) Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. (26) ¹ Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your ² wrath: (27) neither give place to the devil. (28) Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need. (29) Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for ¹ edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace

¹ Gr. *through every joint of the supply.*

² Or, *provocation.*

³ Gr. *the building up of the need.*

meant by putting on the new man. The essence of the old man is lying; and hence they are to put aside all lies and to speak the truth in their dealings with their 25 neighbors, because all lying makes impossible either mutual confidence or the bond of joint membership in the communion of Christ, which is based on such confidence. In the case of their anger, which in itself may 26 be justified, they are not to sin, which takes place at once if it is directed not against the sin but against the sinner. The arousing of anger as a natural feeling cannot at all times be resisted; but it is to be mastered quickly, so that at least the day is not to come to a close before it is gone. For if anger is permitted to 27 continue, we give the Devil an opportunity of leading us into sinful outbursts in word and deed. From greed, as the fundamental sin of the Gentile world, stealing comes. However, the Christian is not only to avoid 28 this, but he is rather to labor hard, so as to win abundant return by the work of his hands, in the place of the sinful gains of stealing, and to be able to give to those who are in need. No foul speech, testifying of 29 the corrupt condition of their hearts, is to proceed from their mouth, but only that which tends to the edification, i. e. the upbuilding of their neighbor, and which serves his needs. For as their needs can be, and ought to be,

to them that hear. (30) And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. (31) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave ¹ you.

¹ Many ancient authorities read *us*.

satisfied by doing good, thus, too, this can be done through good words, with which they really do their neighbors a service of love. For the very reason that the hearer does not often himself realize, that he through his corrupt speech may have harmed rather than helped, 30 the Apostle emphasizes the fact, that through the discord between the word as the first and most natural expression of the spirit, and the Holy Spirit who has been given to us by God, certainly this Spirit is offended, and in Him also God Himself. And yet the Spirit has been given us for the very purpose of making us certain of our redemption, until a day comes on which by the actual redemption from eternal destruction we no longer need such confirmation. This certainly ought to have made it obligatory for us, to show also in every word, that it is the Spirit, who seals for us the highest gifts of God, and who also impels us to fulfil thereby the mission assigned us. Most of all, every word, which evidences any hostility to one's neighbor, be it a word of 31 bitterness or of momentary wrath or even a passionate outburst or bold abuse, in which this anger shows itself, must be entirely put aside by us together with that state of mind which seeks to harm the neighbor. It is rather 32 the proper thing for Christians to be kind toward one another in giving, in being charitable in times of want, to be forgiving, if an offense has been committed. Here it is seen that the new Christian life results as a matter of course from the experience of redemption made by the

EPHESIANS

[V, 1-3

V Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children ; (2)
and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave
himself up for ¹ us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an
odor of a sweet smell.

(3) But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it

¹ Many ancient authorities read *you*.

Christian, which began with this, that God forgave us 1
in Christ. But we are under obligation to imitate God
in this matter, as children who want to be beloved by
the father and to be like unto him. But He has
adopted us as His children and has made us certain of
His love in Christ. Again, the love with which Christ
has Himself loved us compels us to walk in love, as He
did, with which the foundation of a new life is laid.
But He has shown to us such love through giving 2
Himself up unto His atoning death, whereby He gave a
sacrifice, and even a bloody sacrifice, such as was
brought in Israel as a sacrifice of atonement. With a
reference to the Old Testament expression for volun-
tary sacrifices, which were so well pleasing to God, as a
scent saturated with incense, the Apostle states, that
this voluntary character of the act of Christ giving
Himself up unto death, was so pleasing to God, that He
for this reason caused all our sins to be covered in His
eyes. Now we know, that by this walk in love we can
also secure for ourselves the good pleasure of God.

To warn his readers against participating in the sins
of the Gentiles was naturally suggested to the Apostle
by the fact, that their association with the other peo-
ple of their nation who continued to be heathens natu-
rally was a great temptation for the young Gentile
Christians to join in the sins most current in the
heathen world. This is especially true of fornication 3
and of all sexual uncleanness, which in their former
lives they had not even been accustomed to consider as

not even be named among you, as becometh saints ; (4) nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting : but rather giving of thanks. (5) For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (6) Let no man deceive you with empty words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the

something immoral ; but also of covetousness, which is so easily confused with a legitimate effort for the increase of our possessions. All the more strongly must the Apostle condemn these. If it is not suitable for the Christians, as saints, even to take the names of these sins upon their lips, it is of course then out of the question
4 that such sins should be actually committed among them. But also all foolish and frivolous talking, which scoffs about these things and thereby leads to the attitude of taking them lightly, the Apostle declares to be something improper, which is not befitting ; since only thanksgiving for the mercies of redemption, which he
5 has received in faith, are proper for the Christian. He especially emphasizes the point, that he is not telling them anything new with this, as they certainly must know that no fornicator or unclean person, and no miser, who makes his earthly possessions his god and for that reason is an idolater, has any part allotted to him in the kingdom of Christ, as this is to be realized in
6 the consummation of God's kingdom. Those are empty words with which their unbelieving fellow-countrymen try to explain away the greatness of this fact, when they deride the aversion of the Christians against these sins as rigorism ; these are the very persons upon whom, as the sons of disobedience, the judgment of God's wrath, which has been declared to be near, will come. Such their countrymen are and have continued to be if they have rejected the gospel, the believing acceptance of

sons of disobedience. (7) Be not ye therefore partakers with them ; (8) for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord : walk as children of light (9) (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), (10) proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord ; (11) and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even ¹reprove them ; (12) for the things which are done by them in

¹ Or, *convict*.

which God can and does demand. For by these very sins, which poison the transmission of the human race and make them the slaves of that nature which they were intended to rule, they became ripe for the judgment. For this reason they are no longer to have any part with the unbelievers in these sins, to which their 7 social and business dealings with them could easily lead them. At one time, when they were still in darkness through and through, this was, to a certain extent, pardonable, because they did not yet know what 8 sin and its consequences were. But in the living communion with Christ they have received the Spirit who enlightens them and thereby puts them under obligation to walk as the children of light. For the product 9 of the light, which has risen for them in Christ, consists in every kind of goodness, the state of being pleasing to God, and in a life that truly is in agreement with the essence of God as this has been made known to them. They must only yet examine to see what is 10 pleasing to God, and thereby all participation, even of an indirect character, in the works that belong to their 11 former state of darkness, is out of the question, as these certainly do not bring forth any fruits that are to be expected in the case of the children of light. Their business is rather this, to uncover for their fellow-countrymen the disgraceful character of these sins and to rebuke them for these. To a certain degree these people themselves feel that what they do is unfit for pub- 12

secret it is a shame even to speak of. (13) But all things when they are ¹reproved are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light. (14) Wherefore *he* saith, ²Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

(15) Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; (16) ³redeeming the time, because the days are

¹ Or, *convicted*.

² (?) Comp. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

³ Gr. *buying the opportunity*.

licity, and for this reason do these things secretly. But even to mention such things is improper. Nor
 18 may it be said, that those who are enlightened are not to condemn or call by the right name and to reveal in its right character to their heathen fellow-citizens that, the disgraceful behavior of which is yet hidden to them. For only by such public declaration can everything be-
 14 come light, and accordingly, too, those who do these things be enlightened. To this, by a bold New Testament interpretation, the Apostle refers the word of God found in Is. lx. 1. They are to awaken from their sleep, in which they are yet perfectly unconscious of their condition, and to arise from the state of death caused by sin. This is what their rebuke of the sins of their fellow Christians is intended to effect; and the word of God just cited gives them the promise, that in the case of those in whom this rebuke proves successful, Christ will arise as their light, and in this way he, whose life and acts are by such rebuke made known as that which they are, will himself be enlightened.

15 In order to avoid all contamination with the heathen life, they are carefully to watch and examine the manner of their own social life. It would be unwise in their dealings with their neighbors not to avoid everything that would give occasion to such contamination; but it would, on the other hand, be wise, by an earnest rebuke of all Gentile life, to separate themselves once
 16 for all. To this must be added, that they can only

EPHESIANS

[V, 17-20]

evil. (17) Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. (18) And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled ¹with the Spirit; (19) speaking ²one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; (20) giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord

¹ Or, *in spirit*.

² Or, *to yourselves*.

in this way buy out the time, i. e. make use of it for their purposes; and these, since the days are evil, can only consist in securing themselves against all temptation from that which is evil, and by combating it by earnestly rebuking it, in order to make others better. 17 In order to do this they certainly must not be fools, who close their eyes to the difference between right and wrong, but must have a clear understanding of what the Lord's will is. And this brings the Apostle to that point where the judgment is most easily darkened. Social relations with unbelieving neighbors 18 easily mislead the readers to take part also in the heathen banquets, and on these occasions to become drunken with wine. But in this state men are easily led into all kinds of foolishness, and certainly lose the power of rebuking sin. The Christian, too, desires a higher excitement and moments of enthusiasm, which the heathen finds in being filled with material stimulants, such as he seeks in drunkenness; but the Christian finds this in the Holy Ghost. This spiritual 19 inebriation does not find its expression in a worldly drinking song, but in all kinds of songs which the Holy Ghost inspires, whether these be sung in communion with each other or only the hearts glorify God. Mate- 20 rial for such songs is never lacking; for we at all times and for all things are to render thanks to God, who has become our Father in Christ, and such thanksgiving is even our duty, as it takes place in the name, i. e. at the command of Jesus Christ, who has told us to ren-

Jesus Christ to ¹ God, even the Father ; (21) subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

(22) Wives, *be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body. (24) But as the church is subject to Christ, ²so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything. (25) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it ; (26) that he might

¹ Gr. *the God and Father*.

² Or, *so are the wives also*.

der those thanks, and to whom as our heavenly Lord we must be obedient.

- 21 At the command of the same Lord, the Christians in the different relations of subordination which the family brings with it, are also to fulfil their natural duties in the fear of Christ, who will call them to account for these things. The Apostle thinks primarily of married life, in which the women are to subordinate themselves to their own, i. e. to the men who in marriage have been placed over them, as to the
- 22 Lord. For the husband, according to the natural
- 23 order of the sexes, is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church ; He being indeed such, because He has delivered the congregation as His body from eternal destruction, and has thereby established a unique claim for their entire submission to His service.
- 24 Nevertheless the wives, just as the congregation is subordinated to Christ, are to be subject to their husbands in all things. If, then, in Christianity the relation of the congregation to Christ is as such typical for that of the wife to the husband, there results from this,
- 25 too, the duty of the husbands to love their wives, as Christ has loved the congregation. But that thereby only a self-sacrificing love that is devoted to the welfare of the wife, is meant, is clear from the way in
- 26 which Christ has loved the congregation. He has for their good given Himself up to death, so that He could

sanctify it, having cleansed it by the ¹ washing of the water with the word, (27) that he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (28) Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: (29) for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; (30) because we are

¹ Gr. *Laver*.

consecrate them unto God as His property after He has, through baptism, cleansed them from all the pollution of guilt, which would have made such consecration impossible. It is true that this washing of water could not in itself effect this cleansing, but it could do this through the word of promise, through which Christ bestowed upon everybody who is baptized the forgiveness of sins that has been secured through His atoning death. The Apostle expressly emphasizes the fact, that with this purpose of His giving Himself up unto death another submission was also to be found, from which something should accrue to Himself. He wished to 27 present to Himself the congregation, which is His body, and whose head He is, in that state in which alone they could become worthy of this high destiny. As the husband wants to have his wife without blemish, or spot, or any wrinkle, thus, too, their glorification shall consist in this, that they preserve in its purity the sanc- 28 tification that they have attained through their baptism, all of which can take place only, if they, on their part, resign themselves entirely to Him on the ground of His having given Himself unto death for them. But exactly the same condition prevails in regard to the duty of the husbands to love the wives whom they have themselves chosen. They are in them to love their own lives, and accordingly only a part of themselves; because certainly nobody has ever hated his own flesh, 29 but he provides for and takes care of it as part of 30

members of his body. (31) ¹For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. (32) This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. (33) Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and *let the wife see that she fear her husband.*

VI Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (2) ²Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), (3) that it may be well with thee, and thou ³mayest live long on the ⁴earth. (4)

¹ Gen. ii. 24.

² Ex. xx. 12.; Dt. v. 16.

³ Or, shalt.

⁴ Or, land.

himself. This same affectionate care Christ bestows upon His congregation, because it consists of members of His body. What in Gen. ii. 24 is said of the relation
 81 of the husband to the wife, is a great mystery, if, as the
 82 Apostle does, it is applied to the relation of Christ to His congregation. The Son Himself, at His return, will leave His Father in order to unite Himself entirely with His congregation. But apart from this application of this passage, of which the Apostle does not demand that it should be adopted by the readers, he re-
 88 peats that, one and all, they must love their wives as they do themselves. But this love of the husband for the wife, which has come into the world only through the example of Christ in His relation to His congregation, can make no difference in the natural subordination of the wife to the husband; according to which she is to fear him, and not to refuse to do any of her duties to her husband.

1 The Apostle proceeds to discuss another relation of
 8 subordination in family life, that of children and of slaves. That the children obey their parents is just, i. e. according to the will of God, as the commandment, Ex. xx. 12, shows. Indeed it is the first commandment, which is based on a promise, such as in Ex. xx. 6, is
 4 given to all those who out of love of God keep His

EPHESIANS

[VI, 5-8]

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath : but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

(5) ¹Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your ²masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; (6) not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as ¹servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the ³heart; (7) with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men : (8) knowing that whatso-

Gr. Bondservants.

² *Gr. lords.*

³ *Gr. soul.*

commandments. But the Apostle expressly connects with this the commandments addressed to the fathers by excessive strictness not to arouse their children to anger, but to manage their education in such a way, that in reality it is the Lord who is educating and training the children through them. The Apostle also directs the slaves, who in antiquity belonged to the household, 5 to obey those who in the natural relation of life are their masters, and they are to do this in anxiety and fear, lest they fail in any particular matter, as also in the simplicity of the heart, which knows of no sinister motives but from a consciousness of duty. For they are to regard their obedience as rendered to Christ, who, when He called them while yet in the condition of slaves, showed that He had called them to serve Him in the fulfilment of the duties of their station. From this it re- 6 sults as a matter of course that their motive in such service is not eyeservice, as is the case with those who seek only to please men, but that they, as the servants of Christ, from the bottom of their hearts, are to do the will of God, which is the one chief object of all such service. Then they will render their service with a hearty good will, which by the fulfilment of duty tries 7 to do some good to the master and to cause him joy; since they are doing this not for men but for their heavenly Father. All these exhortations which the Apostle asks of them to comply with, he bases on a 8

ever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free. (9) And, ye ¹ masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.

(10) ² Finally, ³ be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that ye

¹ Gr. *lords*.

² Or, *henceforth*.

³ Gr. *be made powerful*.

- reference to the fact, that the Lord will promptly repay every good of any kind that is done; that every one gets exactly that as pay that he has earned whether the person paid be a slave or a freeman. With this he
 9 makes a transition to an exhortation to the masters, who, if this promise applies to them also as much as to the slaves, in their dealing with these are only to do good to them. Thus they must cease uttering threats whereby the slaves were from the outset treated as persons who are to do their duties only from fear of their earthly masters. But the Lord, to whom as the last resort, the slaves as well as the masters are responsible, is in heaven; and as He is impartial, He will punish all wrongs done to a slave exactly as He will that committed by the slaves toward them.
- 10 Only one matter yet remains for the Apostle to mention. This he does in an exhortation to a right method of Christian battle. For this it is first of all necessary to be strong in the living communion with the Lord, in which through His Spirit the entire fulness of His strength passes over to us, as soon as we permit this Spirit to operate in our hearts. We on our part can do nothing more than to prepare ourselves for the struggle
 11 of Christian life, i. e. make use of all the means which bring about the victory in this life. The Apostle compares this with a full suit of armor, such as God provides for us, in order that we may offer resistance to the attacks of the Devil, which are dangerous for this reason,

may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (12) For our wrestling is not against ¹flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. (13) Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. (14) Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, (15) and having shod your feet with the prepa-

¹ Gr. *blood and flesh*.

that they are conceived and carried out in deception. For in the struggle of Christian life there is a contest which, as was the case in the contest in the Roman circus, 12 every man must wage for himself. Our opponents are not of a natural and human kind, but are supernatural powers, which in darkness rule over this world, spiritual beings, full of wickedness, that live in supermundane 13 regions. For this reason we must take the full equipment which God offers us, so that on that evil day, when these through their temptations offer us battle, we can resist; and after we have done everything that is necessary for this battle, may stand our ground as victors. 14 In order to accomplish this, we must now already stand in the full armor of battle, such as the Apostle describes after the picture of the warrior in full equipment. As the latter puts the girdle around the loins, in order to be ready for the struggle, thus we must prepare ourselves in truth for the battle, i. e. must regard this as a serious struggle against that which is evil and not merely to fight as though it were a sham battle, in which in reality there is nothing gained by being victorious. As he puts on the breastplate, thus we must equip ourselves with the full state of being pleasing to God, and which can be hurt by no temptation. As the warrior is pre- 15 pared for the battle, if he enters firmly and confidently with his military shoes on, thus our preparedness for

ration of the ¹gospel of peace; (16) withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. (17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: (18) with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See Mt. 4. 23, marg.

battle must be based on the gospel of peace; for the message of peace with God, which Christ has secured for us, can alone give us the joy for battle against all
16 foes, who would deprive us of this precious possession. In addition to all this, as the warrior finally seizes his shield, on the covering of which even the darts of the enemy that have been set on fire are extinguished without doing him any harm, thus are we protected by the firm confidence in redemption against the most dangerous temptations of evil to bring us to a fall.

But the Christian was not only to fight for his own salvation, but at all times also for the gospel. For this
17 purpose too he must be equipped like a warrior, who is especially recognized by the fact that he wears a helmet. In this way the Christian must first of all secure for himself that salvation which he intends to proclaim to others. But in this case a sword is necessary for every combat; and that sword which is needed for this battle is really handled by the Holy Spirit alone. But the Christian must at all times have also in his hands the word of God, which, because in it the Spirit is
18 operative, alone is able to bring about faith or to strengthen it. This sword, however, they can handle properly only if the struggle, at every opportunity that is favorable for this purpose, through the power of the Holy Ghost, is accompanied by prayer, as this shows itself in all kinds of requests and petitions. And as the warrior must at all times be on guard at his post, thus they must in sleepless nights be steadfast in their

supplication for all the saints, (19) and on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me ¹in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the ²gospel, (20) for which I am an ambassador in ³chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

(21) But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: (22) whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

¹ Or, *in opening my mouth with boldness to make known.*

² Gr. *good tidings.* See Mt. 4. 23 marg. ³ Gr. *a chain.*

watchfulness in every way through their petitions for all Christians, for the salvation of whom they are to battle with prayer and the use of the word of God. 19 The Apostle himself is also to be benefited by their continuous petitions, so that to him, as often as he opens his lips, would be shown what and how he shall speak, in order to proclaim with joy the mystery of the gospel. For the more he knows that in answer to their prayers the right word will be given to him, all the more joyfully will he speak it. This joy may seem to be de- 20 stroyed by the fact that he is lying in fetters and in chains; but he knows that he must perform as a prisoner the work of his very office as messenger of the gospel for the good of the gospel, in order to proclaim it with the boldness with which it should be spoken. For in his very imprisonment, he finds opportunity, as a messenger of the Highest, to meet the highest of the earth and boldly to declare his mission to them.

In the conclusion of his Epistle the Apostle recom- 21 mends Tychicus, who brings this letter. Paul has just 22 written to the Colossians and Tychicus was first to go to Colossæ with the letter intended for this congregation, which in many of its thoughts and expressions is re-echoed in Ephesians, before he began with this present Epistle to make his circuit journey among the

(23) Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (24) Grace be with all of them that love our Lord Jesus Christ ¹ with a love incorruptible.

¹ Or, in incorruption. See Rom. 2. 7.

Gentile Christian congregations of Asia Minor. For this reason Paul declares there are many things he would orally explain to them also, and repeats literally, what in Col. iv. 7, 8, he had said of Tychicus. He wishes them above all things peace and harmony, which are
23 fitting among brethren, who are all the children of God, and also that love for each other, upon which all harmony must be founded. But as this love can be only joined with faith, in the end he adds the wish, that their faith would be preserved and strengthened by God the Father and Our Lord Jesus Christ. The impersonal way in which he here speaks of his readers, to whom these blessings are addressed, already shows that the greater number of the congregation to whom the letter is read, were personally unknown to him. This
24 is apparent too, from the way in which in conclusion he offers his prayer for divine grace to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, i. e. to all true Christians. From this it follows, that, in addition to the Gentile Christian congregations to whom this letter was sent, there were also others in Asia Minor. For this reason in the opening of the letter we also hear the Apostle so frequently discuss the relation of the Jewish to the Gentile Christians. Hence his exhortation to harmony was probably addressed especially to those two classes, who were yet in many particulars separated in Asia Minor. The word with which he characterizes the genuine love to the Lord, contains a reference to the incorruptible state into which Christ, our exalted Lord has already entered, for which reason the love for Him must be incorruptible as He is Himself.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

I Paul and Timothy, ¹servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the ²bishops and deacons: (2) Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,

¹ Gr. *Bondservants*.

² *Overseers*.

The Apostle, in blessing the congregation in Philippi, **1** the first in Macedonia, which Paul had established on his European missionary journey, includes also Timothy, who had labored there with him. The Epistle, which opens with this blessing, is not to be regarded as an official doctrinal or exhortatory writing, but as a letter of friendship. For this reason Paul does not call himself an Apostle, but, together with Timothy, styles himself a servant, whose entire life is devoted to the service of Christ. Hence he does not address the congregation as such, but all the individual Christians in Philippi, who through the living communion with Christ had in their baptism been dedicated to God. He, however, especially mentions among them the bishops and the deacons, who had suggested and collected the gifts of love sent him, which, as we shall see, had furnished the outward occasion for this letter. The salutation is the same as is generally found **2** in all Paul's letters (cf. Rom. i. 7).

The thanksgiving for that which God has wrought in **3** the Philippians the Apostle especially addresses to his God, who, by the fact that he has been successful in his labors among them, has shown him a special love.

(4) always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, (5) for your fellowship in furtherance of the ¹gospel from the first day until now; (6) being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: (7) even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because ²I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the ¹gospel, ye

¹ Gr. *good tidings* : and so elsewhere ; see marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

² Or, *ye have me in your heart*.

This is based on his thorough knowledge of them, for everything that recurs to his memory in connection
 4 with them causes him to be grateful to God. He is filled with this gratitude as often as he prays for them, because he can pray for them all without exception and with joy, since the thought of none of them has ever
 5 saddened the joy of his petition. The reason for this joyfulness of his prayer is to be found in their participation in the proclamation of the gospel, which they showed from the first day when Lydia received him into her house, and thereby gave a certain firm vantage ground to his activity in that city (cf. Acts xvi. 15), until now, when the congregation had sent him help for
 6 the good of his further work. For this love that has been worked in them is at the same time a guarantee that He who has begun a good work in them will also complete it until the day of the return of Christ, which he
 7 himself yet hopes to live to see. To him it appears right and good, when he, with such firm confidence in prayer directs his entire mind and heart to this their consummation, and in this case, too, for all of them, without exception. For he has embraced them all in his heart; and this love for them is not a mere personal affection, but springs from the knowledge that they all partake of the grace which was given to him in his activity, as their gifts to him prove. It is true, that

PHILIPPIANS

[I, 8-11]

are all partakers with me of grace. (8) For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus. (9) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; (10) so that ye may ¹approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; (11) being filled with the ²fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

¹ Or, *distinguish the things that differ.*

² Gr. *fruit.*

he is now in chains; but this very imprisonment as well as the judicial trial which awaits him, give him the opportunity to refute the groundless charges 8 against the gospel that he has preached, and to unfold its unshaken foundation. To what degree he in such love is longing after them, he can indeed not explain to them. On this point he can only direct them to the Searcher of hearts. But this much he can say, that this love is not of a natural and human sort, but fills him through his living communion with Christ, by which the heart of Christ Himself beats within him, and is the inspirer of all his love. At this place Paul 9 states what the object of his constant and loving petition is. The brotherly love, which they have in the past shown to him and to all the believers, is now yet to abound more and more richly in a full knowledge of the right way of showing this love. This knowledge, indeed, cannot be taught, but is always acquired immediately by a fine instinct for that which is beneficial to others. In this way they learn to examine what the 10 difference is between a fruitful and productive demonstration of Christian love, and the opposite. Then they will ever show forth the purest sincerity in their walk in which they will cause no one to be offended or to fall, until the day of Christ, on which they will be examined as to the perfection of the Christian life they have led. This perfection Paul finally describes as a state 11

(12) Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the ¹ gospel; (13) so that my bonds became manifest in Christ ² throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest; (14) and that most of the brethren in the Lord, ³ being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold

¹ Gr. *good tidings*: and so elsewhere; see marginal note on Mt. 4. 23,

² Gr. *in the whole Prætorium*.

³ Gr. *trusting in my bonds*.

of having become perfect, in the fruits which the divinely wrought beginning of life has produced in them, and which consists in the full righteousness or state of being pleasing to God, as this can be worked in us only through Christ. For this alone redounds to the praise and glory of God, since His holy will is thereby being realized in them.

- 12 Because the Philippians as Christian brethren were distressed by heavy cares concerning the disadvantages which the fact that the Apostle was a prisoner in Rome would necessarily bring to the cause of the gospel, he intends first of all to inform them what the consequences of his imprisonment had been for the proclamation of the gospel. This, far from being injurious to
- 13 the gospel, has rather been for its benefit. Since he in his private dwelling was at all times under the guard of Roman soldiers from the body-guard of the Emperor, the Prætorians, it soon became gradually known to the whole garrison, since these guards constantly relieved each other, that he was in chains only because of his proclamation of Christ; and from here this report found its way among all the rest of the inhabitants of the city. But as in this indirect way the message concerning Christ was spread throughout the entire heathen
- 14 metropolis, in the same way the Christian brethren were through his chains encouraged to a more fervent proclamation of the gospel. For the clearer it became in the course of his imprisonment, that nothing

PHILIPPIANS

[I, 15-17]

to speak the word of God without fear. (15) Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: (16) ¹ the one *do it* of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the ² gospel; (17) ³ but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for

¹ Or, *they that are moved by love do it knowing, &c.*

² Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 1. 5.

³ Or, *but they that are factious proclaim Christ, not, &c.*

of a suspicious character could be alleged against his work, the bolder could they become in preaching the word of God everywhere, without being compelled to fear, that they would be suspected of any kind of a crime. This increased zeal in the proclamation of the gospel, which was aroused by his captivity, was not in all cases based on pure motives. There were also those teachers **15** in the congregation who were jealous of the influence of the Apostle, that so vastly surpassed their own, and which the Apostle had as a matter of course gained among the Christians of the city. As a consequence they criticised this and that in connection with his preaching. They sought by a still greater activity to excel the activity of the Apostle, who was naturally hampered by his being in chains, and they claimed to pursue a better way of preaching the gospel in order to eclipse him. Others again preached Christ as a result of upright joy in the manner in which he proclaimed the gospel which they sought to support by their own. But only those who did **16** this on account of their love to their fellows and because they sought their redemption, showed that they were being constantly incited to a greater activity through the knowledge that the condition of the Apostle in his captivity only served the purpose of defending the gospel against all suspicions of lawless purposes. The **17** others, whose work was determined solely by the ambition of being shining lights and of gaining followers for themselves, did not preach Christ from pure motives; for they imagined that they offended the prisoner be-

me in my bonds. (18) What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. (19) For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, (20) according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but *that* with all

cause, they excelled him in their activity and in the 18 extent of their work. That this was an empty boast the Apostle proves by showing what the truth of the case was. He does not ask, what motives of jealousy or envy constituted the pretext for their zeal for the gospel, or whether the motives were of a right kind. He rejoices if only Christ is preached, even if in his present condition those jealous and envious persons feel themselves encouraged by his condition. It is clear from this, that these men, notwithstanding their impure motives, yet preached the pure gospel of Christ. With the assurance that he also for all future times will rejoice, the Apostle proceeds to describe his personal condition in his captivity, on account of which the Philippians were not less concerned than they were in regard to the cause of the gospel.

19 The joy with which the Apostle regards everything that the future may bring is based on the fixed certainty, that his present condition will aid toward his final deliverance from destruction, by which his salvation is made certain. This certainly does not spring from the fact that his strength is sufficient to meet all temptations in the future, but rather from the fact, that, because of the petition of his congregation, the Spirit of Jesus Christ will give him all things that he needs, in order to approve himself in all the trials that the future may 20 have in store for his endurance. But this final outcome which he confidently expects, is in harmony with his

PHILIPPIANS

[I, 21-24]

boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. (21) For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (22) ¹ But if to live in the flesh,—if ² this shall bring fruit from my work, then ³ what I shall choose I know not. (23) But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: (24) yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for

¹ Or, *But if to live in the flesh be my lot, this is the fruit of my work: and what I shall choose I know not.*

² Gr. *this is for me fruit of work.*

³ Or, *what shall I choose?*

most earnest longings and hopes, that he may in no respect be put to shame by not fulfilling in any regard the hopes that had been placed on him in his calling; for upon this yet depends his ultimate deliverance. Rather does he hope, that because of his never-failing boldness in the proclamation of the gospel, Christ would be constantly glorified anew. This can take place if he serves Him in the future in his bodily life, and if he should glorify Him by giving up this life to a martyr's death. 21 But since to him in his bodily life nothing is of any worth or significance except Christ, whom he loves and whom he serves, death can be only a gain to him, because by it he will be perfectly united with Christ. If, however,—and this he cannot conceal from himself,—it is still from one side a gain for him to live in the body, this is the case, because the continuance of his activity is benefleial to his congregation. And when he remembers this, he cannot say which he prefers. He feels himself under strong influences from both sides. He 23 has indeed the desire to depart from this life in time and to be with Christ. Because the communion of the soul with Him which comes with its separation from the body is one more pure and perfect than that which he now already enjoys, to die would be much better than to con- 24 tinue to live. But, on the other hand, the latter is much more necessary for his congregations, who still require his guidance and care. And in this confidence he is con-

your sake. (25) And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy ¹ in the faith; (26) that your glorifying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again. (27) Only ² let your manner of life be worthy of the ³ gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with

¹ Or, *of faith*. ² Gr. *behave as citizens worthily*. Comp. ch. 3. 20.
³ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 1. 5.

- 25 vinced, that he will continue in life, since God will not be influenced by what will personally be preferable to the Apostle, but by what will advance the cause of the Lord. Naturally this must be left to the wisdom of God; but he is convinced that his continuance on earth will accrue to their good, since this will advance them in their Christian life and will increase the joy which they have
- 26 in their faith. Then that, of which they can boast on account of the success which Christ has given him in his activity, will become all the richer by the fact that again, as was the case in the past, he will be with them and will work for the development of their Christian life.
- 27 However great the praise was which the Apostle at the outset of his letter had indirectly bestowed upon the Philippians for their conduct in the past, it naturally must be regarded as a matter of course, that they too are always in need of exhortation to hold fast to their faith. Everything that he expects in the line of their further development when he returns, as he so confidently expects to do, can only be realized, if they, in the intervening time, prove themselves worthy of this gospel life communion with Christ. But this is the case, if he sees at his return, or hears before already during his absence, that they are standing firm in the one Spirit. Only the same Spirit, which they have received in their baptism, can bring this about in them, that they

PHILIPPIANS

[I, 28-30]

one soul striving ¹for the faith of the ²gospel ; (28) and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries : which is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation, and that from God ; (29) because to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf : (30) having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

¹ Gr. *with*. ² Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 1. 5.

fight together for the faith of the gospel. But the gospel is worthy of this that they take a firm stand for the faith that is founded on it in spite of all the 28 threats of the adversaries. The congregation in Philippi had to suffer much at the hands of their heathen fellow-citizens, but they are not under any circumstances to be intimidated or to be deprived of their faith by these. For this very weakness of their adversaries against them was a sign of the fact that those who fight against the cause of God will surely be destroyed. On the other hand, this is for the Philippians a sign, that they will be delivered from this destruction. God Himself gives them this sign ; for it is His grace which has enabled them not only to believe in 29 Christ, but also to suffer for Him and by this suffering to furnish proof of the faith, which ultimately makes them certain of redemption. This merely implies that they must strive hard against the enemies 30 of the gospel, as he too had striven, as they themselves had seen, when he in Philippi was compelled to suffer many things at the hands of these opponents, and which he must continue now in his captivity, as they have heard. If in this he has seen only a grace which God has given him, then they too must look upon the struggles amid their sufferings in the same light.

The struggle of Christians in their sufferings can only be fought out together, since it is harmony that makes strong for every battle. For this reason the

II If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any ¹ consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, (2) make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, ² of one mind ; (3) *doing* nothing through faction or through vain-

¹ Or, *persuasion*.

² Some ancient authorities read *of the same mind*.

Apostle adds a second admonition to that unselfish love which alone preserves this unity. In this matter, which touches the life of the Christian communion, **1** Paul appeals for his exhortation to all that constitutes and fundamentally characterizes this unity. He appeals to the fact that, in the relationship of members with Christ there is contained the right of exhorting each other, a right of asking help of others, with which love exhorts and strengthens the other, as he has just done. But he also appeals to Christian duty, according to which the participation in *one* Spirit, which all have received in the living communion with Christ, demands, that the exhortation, to which the Spirit incites the one is, by the direction of the same Spirit, to be followed by the other. But he can also appeal further to that Spirit of mercy, without which a Christian heart cannot live, in order to point to the sympathy for his condition of suffering, which already makes it obligatory for them to cause him joy by following his exhortations. For, as he presupposes, that it was merely **2** necessary to give expression to his first admonition in order to move them to cause him joy by following it, thus he now asks, that they should make this joy complete by following also his admonition to unity of spirit. But Christian unity does not rest upon a community of selfish interests, but upon this, that everybody has the same love for the other that the other has for him, and they therefore with one mind strive for the single goal of Christian life, which each hopes the other will **3** attain as he wishes this for himself. For among the

PHILIPPIANS

[II, 4-7]

glory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself ; (4) not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. (5) Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : (6) who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, taking the

Christians there is no place for a striving which is controlled by selfish insistence upon one's rights, such as is produced and supported by party spirit, nor for the ambition that is based on the empty glory before men, which makes the fundamental Christian virtue of humility impossible. For in the latter the one regards the other as higher than himself, so that he voluntarily renders him respect and service, as though he were the latter's subordinate. Without such a mind there cannot be that unselfish love, by which a person is brought not to regard his own interests as his one good, but only as they relate to the interests of the other. 4

Self-denying humility is to be the fundamental sentiment of all Christians, because it is to be found already in the Mediator of their redemption, in Jesus Christ. In order to depict to us the model features in this humility, the Apostle, however, does not direct his attention to the earthly life of Jesus, an eyewitness of which he had not been. He looks to the pre-mundane life of Christ, in which He was in divine form, i. e. participated in the heavenly glory, in the light of which God was once accustomed to reveal Himself. Certainly this state, which presupposed an equally divine being, gave Him the right to claim a dignity equal to God. But as Christian humility demands, that we give up all claims which give us any advantages over others, thus He did not regard this being equal to God as something that He could seize as an object that is robbed. But rather 5 6 7

form of a ¹servant, ²being made in the likeness of men ; (8) and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient *even* unto death, yea, the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name ; (10) that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven and

¹ Gr. *bondservant*.

² Gr. *becoming in*.

He emptied Himself voluntarily of that which He already possessed, and thereby exchanging His divine form for that of a servant furnished us an example of that unselfish love which does not seek that which is its own. He assumed the form of a servant of God, whom he regarded as above Himself, although He really was equal to the Father in essence. This He did when He came on earth in the form of a human being ; for He did not appear as one of the heavenly servants of God, but as a man like any other human being. The Apostle again summarizes the result of His self-emptying, according to which He in His actions, i. e. in His entire
8 form of life, was throughout found like unto a man. For he intends yet to add the second feature, according to which Christ entered even into the lower and suffering state, such as can be found only in the career of earthly beings. In this voluntary self-degradation Jesus was obedient to God, into whose service He placed Himself as every man should, even unto death, and
9 that, too, to the most disgraceful and painful death upon the cross. For this reason God has not only exalted Him to His former state, but high above this, to the equal dignity with Himself. Because He did not wish in an arbitrary manner to seize upon this dignity, He received as a gift of His grace the name, in which His pleasure found its expression on this account and which
10 is exalted above every name. What name is meant is clear from the fact, that because of this name He becomes the object of the adoration of all the inhabitants

PHILIPPIANS

[II, 11-12]

things on earth and ¹*things* under the earth, (11) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(12) So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not ²as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ;

¹ Or, *things of the world below.*

² Some ancient authorities omit *as.*

of heaven and of earth, and even of the dead in the world below in so far as these last arise to a new life. 11 For they all are to confess that Jesus Christ is the divine Lord in the sense in which God alone bears this name. Not in order thereby to deprive God of His glory, but for the very purpose of glorifying Him, since in this universal adoration of the Son the final purpose of the counsel of redemption which the Father had formed, has been attained. This reward too of the self-emptying and the self-degradation of Jesus is to be an example of that which the Christians can expect if they follow Him in His unselfish humility.

For this reason the Apostle can only admonish his 12 beloved Philippians to be anxiously concerned for the salvation of their souls. He does this in the consciousness that they have at all times been obedient to him. But he must yet emphasize the fact that, if they have followed such admonitions in his presence, they must do it all the more in his absence, when they do not have the constant impulse of his admonishing word. Now they are themselves to secure their final deliverance, by adding to their firmness in the struggle of faith that humble spirit of love according to the example of Jesus, whose final exaltation guarantees to them the participation in His glory and blessedness. They are to do this with fear and trembling before God, who decides with reference to blessedness and condemnation, because they can no longer excuse themselves

(13) for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (14) Do all things without murmurings and questionings; (15) that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as ¹lights in the world, (16) holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I

¹ Gr. *luminaries*. Wisd. 13. 2; comp. Rev. 21. 11.

18 on the plea of human weakness. For it is not they who are to work out all that is necessary for this. It is God Himself, who works in them both the will, as also the power. But because He does this on account of the good pleasure which He has in such willing and doing, they would not only lose their redemption, but would also be sinning against Him, if they should not permit Him to work in them. As he thereby opposes all false security, he also antagonizes their indulgence in discouragement and doubt. They are to do what is given them to do, without murmuring against God, as though He were demanding too much from them or imposing too much upon them, or to have hesitating doubts, whether perchance they are able to do and to bear that which is demanded of them. Only in this way they can walk unblamable before the eyes of God, and be clean from all impure contamination. With a reference to Deut. xxxii. 5, the Apostle thereupon calls them the unblemished children of God in the midst of a corrupt and perverted generation, because the very fact that they
 15 are privileged to be the children of God puts them under obligation, in contrast to all moral obliquity around and about them, to prove the blameless obedience which is befitting such children. And, as in the darkness of the terrestrial world, the luminaries of the heavens arise in order to dispense their light, in the
 16 same way they are to shine as spiritual light-bearers in the midst of the humanity that walks in the darkness

PHILIPPIANS

[II, 17-18]

did not run in vain neither labor in vain. (17) Yea, and if I am ¹ offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all: (18) and in the same manner do ye also joy, and rejoice with me.

¹ Gr. *poured out as a drink-offering.*

of sin, because they possess the word of life, which points out to all men, and also to themselves, the way to life, and thereby to eternal redemption. This will be for him a reason for glorifying, since he himself can, on the day of the return of Christ, boast of them as the fruits of his labors, because their contrast with the world around and about shows, that all his labor and all his efforts had not been in vain in their case. It is 17 true that his triumphant joy on this account seems likely to be destroyed, should his successful labors, contrary to the hope that he had expressed above, and which was the presupposition of all his exhortations to them, cost him his life. His death as a martyr, in which his blood will be shed, he compares to a drink-offering, as this is poured out in connection with other sacrifices. Such a sacrifice he has brought to God in the faith of the Gentile Christians, which was pleasing to Him, and in the establishment and development of which he has rendered the necessary priestly services. But even should he in this service be called upon to die the death of a martyr, he would be glad, on account of the success of his labors and rejoice with them all. For they have ground for rejoicing primarily, because they enjoy the blessings of this work. He describes it 18 as a duty of sympathy, that they, too, are to rejoice, and even to rejoice with him. Indeed, it is for this very purpose that he has explained to them above, that he rejoices because of the consequences of his captivity for the proclamation of the gospel, and awaits with full joy any outcome whatever of this captivity, so

(19) But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. (20) For I have no man like-minded, who will care¹ truly for your state. (21) For they all seek their own, not

¹ Gr. *genuinely*.

that they, too, on their part, can discard all their concern about him and the cause of the gospel, and share in his intense Christian joy. This is also the object to which he refers subsequently in speaking of the mission of Timothy and the sending back of Epaphroditus.

- 19 Paul expresses a hope, based on his confidence in the Lord Jesus, who through His providential guidance of affairs, will make this possible for him, that he may be able to send Timothy to them, who will confirm everything that he has said concerning his condition, and in this way is to change their disquietude into joy. But with great considerateness the Apostle states that the real purpose of this mission was that he, who was also worried about their sufferings, is to be refreshed by the reports that Timothy would bring
- 20 back to him. He explains why it is Timothy whom he sends, and whom, as his favorite pupil, he apparently in his present condition could spare the least. But he has none others who are exactly of the same mind, and who in such a genuine, i. e. perfectly unselfish way, care for all their affairs, since he now would undertake the long journey to Philippi only for the purpose of being able with the eyes of love to examine the condition of affairs there, and to bring the Apostle
- 21 news of them. Evidently those, who on account of their relations to Philippi, could be considered in connection with such a mission, had all declined to undertake it, because they all were not willing, in such an unselfish manner, to serve the cause of Christ as this mission demanded, in connection with which there

the things of Jesus Christ. (22) But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child *serveth* a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the ¹gospel. (23) Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me: (24) but I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly. (25) But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 1. 5.

could be no personal gain of any kind. But the fidelity 22 of Timothy must have been known to them, since they, at the time when he was laboring among them in company with the Apostle, had themselves seen with what filial love he had served him, or, rather, with him, in the work of the gospel proclamation. For this reason he 23 intends to send Timothy. He hopes that this plan can be speedily consummated; for it is necessary for him to await first the outcome of his own matter, since he, under circumstances, may not be able to do without Timothy, or the purpose of his sending, of itself, may prove abortive. But through this mission his own re- 24 turn to them is not to be made less certain. On the contrary, his confidence that he himself will come to them, and that speedily, now as heretofore rests with the Lord, who guides his ways.

If, according to this, the Apostle is compelled to 25 make the sending of Timothy contingent on future events, he has, however, regarded it as necessary at once to send Epaphroditus to them. He describes him not only as his beloved brother, but also as a co-laborer, who in the battle against the enemies of the gospel had stood by his side, which could have taken place only in Philippi. If it is already clear from this that he permitted Epaphroditus to depart only with reluctance, he now emphasizes especially what this man has been to the Philippians. This man they had selected as their representative, in order to bring to the Apostle

³ messenger and minister to my need ; (26) since he longed
⁴ after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard
 that he was sick : (27) for indeed he was sick nigh unto death :
 but God had mercy on him ; and not on him only, but on me
 also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow. (28) I have
 sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when ye see him
 again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful

¹ Gr. *apostles*.

² Many ancient authorities read *to see you all*.

the gifts of the congregation, and in their place to render him whatever service he needed. Paul is compelled to give all the more fully the motives, why he does not retain him in Rome, but sends him back with this letter, although the Apostle intentionally avoids
 26 making use of this term. This was caused by the mental state of the man, who, after he had recovered from a severe sickness, was seized with an uncontrollable homesickness. He describes this in his tender manner in this way, as though his longing for them, especially his anxious unrest on their account, was the cause of his sickness, and that they had doubtlessly on
 27 this account been much concerned about him. The Apostle confirms this by the statement, that Epaphroditus had also been so sick as to be brought near to death. But the Apostle again expresses in strong terms his high esteem of the man whose weakness had in a certain way thwarted the purpose they had in sending him to the Apostle. He describes his present convalescence, not only as a proof of the mercy of God toward the sick man, but also toward the Apostle himself. The purpose had been to prevent sorrow for the death of the friend from being added to his sufferings, which had been sufficiently great already through the sickness of the friend and the anxiety of the Philip-
 28 pians on account of their representative. In this way he has given the reason why he has sent back Epaphroditus sooner than he otherwise would have done, in

PHILIPPIANS

[II, 29-30]

(29) Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy ; and hold such in honor : (30) because for the work of ¹Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

¹ Many ancient authorities read *the Lord*.

order not to spoil the purposes of their affection in sending him to the Apostle. But he here adds yet another reason, namely, that he desires to cause them joy in seeing him again, and also relieve them, now that the anxiety concerning the sickness of Epaphroditus has been removed, from all anxiety on account of their concern about their messenger. Every word that he says on this subject is intended to prepare a welcome reception to the returning Epaphroditus, who had not been able under the circumstances to carry out their injunctions. For this reason he directly demands of them to receive him in the Lord, i. e. in a genuine Christian mind, with pure joy, which is not lessened by any disappointment on account of the partial thwarting of their good purposes in sending him, and they are to keep men like him in all honor. How much Epaphroditus was deserving this, he especially mentions again at the close. How thoroughly Paul understands and appreciates the commission that had been entrusted to this man, is already apparent from the fact that he describes this as work that had been assigned by Christ to him through the congregation. But in order to carry out this commission, their representative has done nothing less than risk his own life. Evidently he had been taken sick on the way, and yet had continued his journey in order to carry out the injunctions given him, although this brought him nigh unto death. For Epaphroditus only desired on his part to supply what was yet lacking on their part in the service which they wished to render to the Apostle

III Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. (2) Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision : (3) for we are the circumcision, who

in sending him these gifts of their love. For this reason he made the journey even at the risk of his life, in order to transmit their donations to the Apostle personally, and to offer him his services.

- 1 After the Apostle has again and again in different ways called upon the Philippians to rejoice, there is left for him only to emphasize, that their joy must be rooted in the living communion with Christ. The Apostle excuses the fact that he is continually writing about true Christian joy with fine irony, by stating that this was not a subject on account of which he neglected to write more important things, and which would certainly not be harmful to them, i. e. in truth be very wholesome. But the character of this joy, which is rooted in
- 2 Christ he cannot depict to them in a better way than by a reference to three entirely different kinds of men, whose joy is rooted in altogether different things. He mentions first the heathen around about the readers, who find their pleasure in uncleanness and whom he accordingly, employing a current expression, calls unclean dogs ; then the evil workmen, concerning whom he has said above that they take pleasure in envy and contention ; and, finally, the unbelieving Jews, who were proud of their circumcision. And yet their circumcision, after it has lost its entire value because they have rejected the promise that was fulfilled in Christ, is now nothing else than a meaningless mutilation, a concision, as he says. In contrast to these he can give a most clearly vivid picture of the character of this Christian joy. For the
- 3 Christians are the true circumcision, since they are cir-

worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh : (4) though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh : if any other man ¹thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more : (5) circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,

¹ Or, *seemeth*.

cumcised in baptism, i. e. have been cleared of all their old sinful nature, (cf. Col. ii. 11), and now, through the power of the Spirit of God, whom they have received in this rite, they alone render the true service, which the Jews through their circumcision thought that they possessed. The boasting of the Christians, i. e. their triumphant joy, with which they glory of their great advantages, is rooted alone in Christ, because they do not place their confidence in anything that is human or natural, 4 but upon Christ alone. The Apostle has indeed sufficient reason and occasion to trust also such natural and human advantages, such as those of which the Jews boast, and indeed, can do so more than any one else, who thinks himself entitled to do this. Then he enumerates these advantages, and first of all those which he has secured 5 through his birth. He is a Jew by birth and unlike the proselytes had not gone over to Judaism in later life, which fact is attested by his being circumcised according to the law on the eighth day. He is a genuine Jew, who descends from the generation of Israel, whereas the Ishmaelites and the Edomites were also descended from Abraham and Isaac ; he was even from the tribe of Benjamin, and accordingly from the theocratic kernel of the nation which alone returned from the exile. His descent from the Hebrews is not in the least broken by marriages with foreigners. After these advantages accruing to him from his birth, he proceeds to those which he has himself acquired, since he became a Pharisee, i. e. belonged to the party that most strictly observed the law.

6 That he was very zealous
by the fact, that he
tion; and as far as
on the fulfilment of
blameless, not indeed
sense of his party.

7 But all of these advantages
since they secured for
mankind, he at his cost
8 they hindered him from
viour and from placing
rects himself as it were
according to his present
be found in these advantages
harm in comparison with
knowledge of Christ as
which he lost on account
his whole Jewish and he
the loss of that which he
in truth no harm at all.
declare that we can give
no and still

PHILIPPIANS

[III, 9-11]

refuse, that I may gain Christ, (9) and be found in him, ¹ not having a righteousness of mine own, *even* that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God ² by faith : (10) that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death ; (11) if by any

¹ Or, *not having as my righteousness that which is of the law.* ² Gr. *upon.*

for his life communion with Him is to manifest itself. 9 But this takes place, provided he confesses himself as one who no longer has a self-acquired righteousness, such as would result from the fulfilment of the law, but a righteousness which is based on confidence in Christ as the only Mediator of redemption and comes from God alone, who gives it to the believers out of grace. On the ground of this faith, which makes impossible all personal and all independent acquisition of righteousness, he desires to be found in the living communion with Christ, because only by appropriating Him in faith he can through his 10 own experience know what he possesses in Christ as the only basis of our redemption. Moreover, he feels the power of His resurrection, which gives him the assurance of Christ's atoning death and of the righteousness that is given him because of his death. He learns that all suffering, which he meets within the communion of life with Christ, is only a participation in His sufferings, by which he is being made like to His death. Only through this communion of suffering with Christ, can 11 he hope to be delivered from the state of death, and attain to that resurrection which Christ attained through His death. For this reason he can learn fully to know only in the communion of life with Christ as approved by suffering, that Christ is the only ground of all our joy and hope.

The Apostle proceeds to speak of the second class of people, in contrast with whom he purposes explaining

means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead. (12) Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may ¹lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. (13) Brethren, I count not myself ²yet to have laid hold: but one thing *I do*, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, (14) I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the ³high calling of God in

¹ Or, *lay hold, seeing that also I was laid hold on.*

² Many ancient authorities omit *yet.* ³ Or, *upward.*

what true Christian joy is. They are those preachers of the gospel, who in thinking themselves above the Apostle and in their rivalry of him, claim that they are themselves perfect, or even cast it up to him that he claimed
 12 to be so. But with all that he has said concerning his finding in Christ the one redemption and the basis of all his joy, he does not wish to say that he has already attained to the perfection of Christian joy. But he is striving after this goal, to see if he can secure it as he has been secured in Christ. But when Christ, at His appearance to him near Damascus, took complete possession of him, He could have had no other purpose than that the Apostle now in turn should completely lay hold of Him and of
 18 the redemption which comes through Him. He again, in solemn words, since in his brotherly love for them this is a matter of greatest importance for him, gives the admonition that they should understand him fully, that he does not, as other people do, think of himself as
 14 though he has grasped it. He thinks indeed that he has laid hold of only one thing, namely, the constant striving for this goal. As the runner in the race does not lose any time in looking back to see how great a distance he has already covered, but with body bent forward seeks for his goal as though he would grasp it even before his feet have passed the yet intervening space, thus he is doing. He thinks no longer of the distance that he has already gone through, but strives in constantly increas-

PHILIPPIANS

[III, 15-17]

Christ Jesus. (15) Let us therefore, as many as are ¹perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall God reveal unto you: (16) only, whereunto we have attained, by that same *rule* let us walk.

(17) Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark

¹ Or, *full grown*. 1 Cor. 2. 6.

ing communion with Christ to succeed fully in laying hold upon Christ and the consummation of his Christian joy. Only when he has arrived at this goal can he secure the crown of victory, which God has in heaven set apart for him through his call. Christian perfection really 15 consists only in this constant striving for perfection; and this should be the aim of all. And if in any point they yet still think differently, because they imagine that they are already perfect in this particular, God will reveal to them in His Spirit, that they are in this respect also to adhere to this general Christian principle. It is 16 their duty to make this their rule, to prove with their whole life and conduct the knowledge that they have already attained, and then God will lead them further.

With this the Apostle reaches the subject of Christian life and conversation, and teachers, how this is to be conducted if all our Christian joy be rooted in Christ and its perfection is constantly sought in Him. As in this 17 matter he proceeds from His example, thus it was befitting for them as his beloved brethren, that in their walk, too, they together with all other Christian congregations should be his imitators. They are to direct their attention to those who walk thus, i. e. after his example, according to the model furnished by the Apostle and all his followers. But this brings him to the third kind of people, by the contrast to whom he desires to explain what true Christian joy is. He desires to show that in their manner of life their joy is rooted in the very opposite. But before he describes this manner of life

them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample. (18)
For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you
even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:
(19) whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and ~~whose~~

- 18 more fully, he checks himself, in order to state who they are of whom he is thinking. These are the enemies of the cross of Christ, the heathen around and about them. How often has he spoken of these when he showed why the preaching concerning the cross was to them foolishness and would continue to remain so, and indeed an object of their enmity, because this preaching disturbs them in their life of shameless lust; and now he can speak of them only with tears, because he has given up the hope of converting them, since God through his long imprisonment has put a stop to the work of the
- 19 Apostle of the Gentiles. The character of their life is apparent in that their end is destruction, their belly is their God, i. e. the satisfaction of their meanest desires is their greatest joy and the object of all their endeavors, and they even seek glory in that which brings shame upon them. This is the natural result of the fact, that whereas the Christian's mind and strivings are directed heavenwards, theirs are directed toward the earth. For to Christians, Christ is both the foundation of the Christian's joy as also He is of the Christian's hope. For Christians know that they belong to a community which is in heaven, because their King is there enthroned; and from there they expect their Lord Jesus Christ as the Deliverer from that destruction, which will certainly overwhelm the heathen. What the latter have been striving for in their deification of the meanest sensual enjoyments, and for which they seek their honor in all that is disgraceful, all this the former attain in incomparable glory from Him who is the joy and the hope of their life.

PHILIPPIANS

[IV, 1-2

glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. (20) For our ¹citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (21) who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, *that it may be conformed to the body of his glory*, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.

IV Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.

(2) I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the

¹ Or, *commonwealth*.

For He will transform their body, which is through 20 sin degraded to be the prey of corruption, so it shall be made a body like that which Christ bears in heaven and will possess His heavenly glory. He can do this; for 21 He who in the future makes subject to Himself whatever may be opposed to Him, is also able to conquer the last enemy, namely death, to which our body is subject because of its corruption, and to reawaken this body to unchangeable glory. For this reason Paul at the close 1 of this entire discussion, which constitutes the real doctrinal kernel of the letter, addresses himself again to his beloved brethren, for whom he has such a strong longing. They are his joy and his crown of honor, because the congregation, which he has established and faithfully developed in this city, is his decoration as the most beautiful mark of his successful activity. He begs of them to stand firm in the communion with the Lord, in whom all their joys are rooted and toward whom all their striving is directed, and who is to be their entire hope. For thus he has taught them concerning the true character of Christian joy.

The concluding admonitions of the Apostle begin 2 with an exhortation to two women, the names of both being specially mentioned, so that no one should blame any other. These two did not live in harmony, which, according to the communion in Christ he has just de-

same mind in the Lord. (3) Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the ¹ gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

(4) Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See ch. 1. 5.

8 scribed, is to be the natural condition of affairs among Christians. He, moreover, asks another person whom he, in order to furnish a motive for this request, calls a true yokefellow, to assist them in reaching an understanding. This man was probably a relative of the two, or most probably of the woman mentioned second, and was possibly her husband, and because he had always proved himself to be a man who faithfully helped her in bearing her yoke, was well adapted for this purpose. But lest their public exhortation should appear to degrade these two women before the congregation, in which they seem to have been prominent persons, Paul recalls in this connection, also to support his petition, the services which they had at one time rendered to the congregation. At that time, when amid many struggles he was working for the gospel cause in Philippi, they had assisted him in the evangelical propaganda, and in order that it might be known what events he had in mind, he mentions the name of a man who also assisted him on that occasion. The names of his other co-laborers of that time he does not need to mention; but what is of much greater importance, they are recorded in the book of life, whereby eternal salvation is guaranteed to them on account of their faithful co-operation.

4 But then the Apostle returns to the main theme of his letter, by admonishing them to rejoice in the Lord; but with the additional statement, that they shall do this at all times. And because this in their present state of suffering is not easy, he determines, as it were in their

PHILIPPIANS

[IV, 5-7

(5) Let your ¹ forbearance be known unto all men, The Lord is at hand. (6) In nothing be anxious ; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

¹ Or, *gentleness*. Comp. 2. Cor. 10. 1.

presence, to repeat the command, Rejoice. But if such joy is present in the heart, then it must show itself outwardly in their concession even to unjustifiable demands, lest they permit the outbreak of a quarrel, and at the same time fail in consideration for the weaknesses of the neighbors. Such a mild spirit they are to show to all men, even to the Gentiles around and about them ; for the Lord is at hand, who at His return will ask, whether they have by their gentleness followed His example. But as nothing disturbs the joy of the Christian so much as anxious solicitude, the Apostle shows how this may be overcome. All that is necessary is, that in all matters that cause us anxiety, to make this known to God in prayerful intercourse ; for that He will regard such prayer is a matter of course. However, this must not take place without thanksgiving for that which has already been received, because the memory of this ever produces the certainty of a constant renewal of this hearing, which helps more than anything else to overcome this anxiety. In this way the Christian attains the inner peace of his soul, which God the Father awakens in the prayerful man. It is true that natural reason never understands how we can under all circumstances have confidence in God. But that peace of God, which goes beyond and above reason in its worry and anxious considerations, will preserve their hearts in the communion with Christ, together with all the thoughts that seek to disturb them. For He who has given the peace which this communion works, will also

(8) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are ¹ honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are ² of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, ³ think on these things. (9) The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

(10) But I ⁴ rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; ⁵ wherein ye did

¹ Gr. *reverend*. ² Or, *gracious*. ³ Gr. *take account of*.
⁴ Gr. *rejoiced*. ⁵ Or. *seeing that*.

provide for this, that the anxious deliberations, which
 8 would disturb or confuse this peace, will not destroy
 this communion. If this religious basis of all Christian
 life is preserved, nothing yet remains, except an admoni-
 tion to the true moral conduct. Paul describes this as
 that which is true, because it is in harmony with the
 revealed nature of God, and emphasizes, that this shows
 itself outwardly as that which is honorable, but at the
 same time also as that which is just, i. e. in agreement
 with the divine will and therefore untouched by any-
 thing that is sinful. He makes it prominent, that this
 is at the same time what is lovable before men and under
 good report among them, whether we call this a virtue
 9 or something that deserves praise. These are the things
 which alone the Christian considers. For thus they have
 been taught in their Christian instruction, or it has been
 otherwise handed down to them as befitting the Chris-
 tian. This they have heard from him and have seen in
 him. Hence this is to be the object of all their doings.
 In this case God, without whom they cannot attain to
 peace, will accompany them and work this peace in
 them. It cannot be earned through correct Christian
 conduct alone; but without this, it cannot even be
 given.

10 The Apostle proceeds to express his thanks for the
 gifts, which furnished the occasion for this letter.

PHILIPPIANS

[IV, 11-15]

indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. (11) Not that I speak in respect of want : for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. (12) I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound : in everything and in all things have I learned the secret of both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. (13) I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. (14) Howbeit ye did well, that ye had fellowship with my affliction. (15) And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of

It has also been a joy in the Lord, and that a great one for him, that they caused their care for him, as it were, to sprout forth anew. For he sees in their donations a sign of their constant care, which up to the present time had only lacked opportunity, i. e. an occasion for showing itself. He puts aside the misunderstanding as 11 though he intended to say this merely because he had been in need, so that his joy would really be an account of his deliverance from his needs ; for he personally had learned to be contented in every condition of life in which he might find himself. He understands 12 how to adjust himself to conditions and times of want ; he also understands how to make use of a surplus, which it is often even harder to do. He, on all occasions and times, understands the art to be both hungry and to be satisfied, to have both a surplus and a lack. All things he can do, not through himself, but in the 13 living communion with Him who gives him strength for this purpose. But apart from this contentment, through the mention of which he had not intended to depreciate their gifts, they have done well in showing 14 their sympathy for him in his oppressed condition by sending him their donations. But this they know perfectly well, when he declares with increasing earnestness, calling them by name, why he would expect 15 such a good work first of all from them above all

the ¹ gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only ; (16) for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need. (17) Not that I seek for the gift ; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account. (18) But I have all things, and abound : I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things *that came* from you, an odor of a

others. He needs only to remind them of the time, when his gospel propaganda began from Macedonia, because they know that at that time no other congregation as yet, as he considerately expresses himself, had business relations with him, or had offered him provision for his bodily support, in payment for the spiritual gifts they received. From them alone he at that time
16 received support. But then, too, when he was no longer laboring in Philippi, but in Thessalonica, where he could no longer earn such support, they, on one occasion, and on a second, sent him a donation to meet
17 his wants, which he could not satisfy by working at his trade. Of course in such a connection he does not look at the gift as something by which he has profited, but as the fruit of gratitude which his labors among them had produced. But this fruit is really to be put to their credit, since such evidence of their Christian life in grateful love constitutes, so to say, their revenue. But by this he does not intend to indicate that he still
18 wants other gifts. He has everything that he could possibly expect, and has even a surplus. He feels that all his wishes have been fulfilled by what he has received through Epaphroditus. For he sees in this, as he expresses himself with a reference to the Old Testament way of describing a voluntary sacrifice, a breath filled with sweet odors, a sacrifice acceptable to God, which is pleasing to Him. Such a sacrifice is the

PHILIPPIANS

[IV, 19-23]

sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. (19) And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (20) Now unto ¹ our God and Father be the glory ² for ever and ever. Amen.

(21) Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren that are with me salute you. (22) All the saints salute you, especially those that are of Cæsar's household.

(23) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

¹ Or, *God and our Father.*

² Gr. *unto the ages of the ages.*

fruit of the activity that he is seeking. But he ex- 19
plains how much this is to be credited to them, by the
fact that his God, because they have brought this
sacrifice in order to fulfil all his wishes, now also will
completely fulfil all their needs, and that, too, in ac-
cordance with His riches in a glorious, i. e. super-
abounding way. But this compensation will be given
them in Christ Jesus, who transmits to them the
full redemption that comes from God. But to Him, 20
who has become His and their Father in Christ, all due
honor for this, is to be rendered from eternity to
eternity, and he seals this, too, with his Amen.

In concluding his letter, the Apostle instructs the 21
leaders of the congregation, to whom the letter was
delivered, to greet every one to whom it was addressed
from him and his brethren, who are with him. He 22
sends greetings from all the Christians in Rome, which
he was probably in part directly instructed to trans-
mit; and as for the rest, he naturally presupposed that
they joined in this greeting. But he especially makes
prominent the greetings of those who belong to the
imperial court, probably only to the household in gen- 23
eral. In his final blessing, he prays that the grace of
the Lord Jesus Christ may accompany them in the
development of their new spiritual life.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

I Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy ¹our brother, (2) ²to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *that are at Colossæ*: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

(3) We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus

¹ Gr. *the brother*.

² Or, *to those that are at Colossæ. holy and faithful brethren in Christ.*

- 1** In his introductory greeting, Paul addresses himself to the Christians at Colossæ, a city of Phrygia, where he had himself never been, and in which he had not established the congregation. But as this consisted of former Gentiles, he who according to the divine will has been above all others chosen to be the Apostle of Christ for the Gentiles, feels himself justified and obligated to send a writing of exhortation and instruction to them. In his salutatory he includes his pupil and companion Timothy, who was nothing else to the Colossians but a Christian brother, because the Apostle
- 2** offers his greeting also to them only as his brethren in Christ. This they have become in baptism, in which they have become consecrated to God as His possession, and in which, on their part, they have entered into the communion of life with Christ. He wishes them both grace and salvation from God, who as our Father in Christ always has this in readiness for us.
- 3** Timothy joins in thanksgiving for that which Paul, together with him, has heard, namely, for what God has done for the Colossian Christians, and that, too, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through

COLOSSIANS

[I, 4-6]

Christ, praying always for you, (4) having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have toward all the saints, (5) because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the ¹gospel, (6) which is come unto you ; even as it is also in all the world bearing fruit and increasing, as *it doth* in you also, since the day ye heard and knew the grace of God in truth ;

¹ Gr. *good tidings* : and so elsewhere ; see marginal note on Mt. 4. 23.

whom He did this. As often as they both think of 4 them in their petitions, they must first thank God, because it is only He who has worked in the readers the confidence of faith that is founded on Christ and has made them Christians, as also it is He who has produced the love which connects them with all who belong 5 to God. But as the Apostle returns special thanksgiving to God for the hope of heavenly blessings, which have hereby been deposited for them above as a sure possession, the purpose of the letter becomes clear from this statement. It is the purpose of the Epistle to show us, again and again, that this hope had been shaken among the Colossians expressly for the purpose of making them believe that this possession still depended on other conditions than the simple faith in the gospel. For this reason the Apostle describes the gospel as the truth that has been declared to them, through the word of which, before even their Christian life began, they certainly had heard, what they have to hope for above. For over against the false doctrines 6 which were being circulated in their midst at the present time as a new truth, the gospel, which before this had obtained a firm foothold among them, is the same as that which is proclaimed over the entire world. But that this is the genuine gospel is seen from the fact, that it everywhere produces the fruit of faith and love, and constantly expands the influence of its blessings. This they have also experienced in themselves

(7) even as ye learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on ¹our behalf, (8) who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

(9) For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and

¹ Many ancient authorities read *your*.

since the day when they first heard it. For through the gospel they attained to the knowledge of that which is without doubt the center of all preaching of salvation, namely, the grace of God. The Apostle expressly declares that this knowledge is one that is actually perfect, and accordingly stands in no need of
7 being supplemented. That man, from whom they have learned this gospel, is the surety for this. For this Epaphras, who has founded the congregation, he can call the beloved co-laborer of himself and of his Timothy, and who serves Christ faithfully in the interests of readers. His present journey to the Apostle too had only the one purpose of reporting to him concerning the disturbances in the congregation, so that Paul should strengthen them through his word, and guard
8 them from all errors. The fidelity of Epaphras, however, they can themselves judge by the way in which he had reported their love for the Apostle and his pupil. For this was a love which was not founded upon personal acquaintance, but upon the Holy Ghost, who had made them certain of this, that Paul was the divinely sent preacher of the gospel. For Epaphras had always appealed to him as his teacher.

9 As the Apostle and his companion have heard that the gospel which Epaphras had proclaimed to them had produced in them faith and love, with which at all times prayer for the further development of one's self and of all other Christians is found connected, these two also, from the time when they first heard this news, have

COLOSSIANS

[I, 10-11

understanding, (10) to walk worthily of the Lord ¹ unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing ² in the knowledge of God; (11) ³ strengthened ⁴ with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all ⁵ patience

¹ Or, unto all pleasing, in every good work, bearing fruit and increasing, &c.
² Or, by. ³ Gr. made powerful. ⁴ Or, in. ⁵ Or, steadfastness.

never failed to pray for them always; for the communion of love among the Christians and with one another, is, above all things, a communion of prayer. The object of their prayers for them is, however, that they may grow to perfection. True, this does not consist in that in which the new human wisdom teaches them to look for it, but in this, that they recognize that the will of God applies to them also as fully as 10 they have learned to know His grace. It is only that wisdom which had been worked by the Spirit that can show us the way upon which we must walk according to the will of God; only the knowledge that comes from the same source, in its correct manifestations amid the varied conditions of life, can teach us to walk in a manner that is in every respect pleasing to God. But this alone is worthy of the Lord, whom we are to serve in all our doings. Their fulness of knowledge will show itself in three ways: first of all, not in the arbitrary abstinence, which, as the letter will show, was to be the fruit of the new wisdom which had been brought to them, but in this, that they bring forth fruit in every good work, and constantly increase in the knowledge of God. For this knowledge is never perfected in us until we recognize His will equally in its demands and its purpose of grace toward us; and it must from both sides produce in us what it is intended to produce, namely, good works, if it is the true knowledge. But as in action, thus also in suffer- 11 ing, Christian life must be exhibited, and for this there is need of strength from on high, through which we

and long-suffering with joy ; (12) giving thanks unto the Father, who made ¹ us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ; (13) who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of

¹ Some ancient authorities read *you*.

may be strengthened in every respect. But this power can come only out of the storehouse of God's glorious strength, to which we, only through the knowledge of God, must learn at all times to apply. In this way alone can we learn to bear all our sufferings patiently, and to manifest long-suffering towards
12 those who do us injury. But the crown of Christian life is the third, namely, the joyful thanksgiving to Him, whose fatherly love we can learn from the way in which He has made us capable of attaining that blessed goal of our hopes, which is guaranteed to us in the gospel. The Apostle declares that this is allotted to them by God as a participation in the possessions which He has prepared above in light, i. e. in the place of all blessedness for those whom He claims as His own. But whereby God has made us capable of this goal, the Apostle describes by a reference to the general experience of Christianity. But as a matter of course, he alone can attain to the heavenly light who
13 has been delivered from the Satanic power, with which the darkness of sin rules over us. But this has taken place when God through baptism has transferred us into the kingdom of His Son, who, because He rules over us as our heavenly King, enables us to serve His will, and thereby God's will also. But since our Lord, as His Son in the fullest sense of the word, is the highest object of divine love, so He gives to us also in His kingdom to partake of this love, which can never be satisfied until it has brought us to the glorious goal of the consummation in the next world. This

COLOSSIANS

[I, 14-17]

his love ; (14) in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins : (15) who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation ; (16) for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers ; all things have been created through him, and unto him ; (17) and he is before all things, and in him

was of course only possible when this Son, through the 14 ransom paid by His blood, bought us free from the load of guilt which sin had laid upon us. For only he who is free from the guilt of sin can begin a new life in the kingdom of the Son, and, like Himself, become the object of God's love.

In contrast to the new wisdom which imagined that 15 the glory of God was unfolded in an endless fulness of heavenly beings and regarded Christ as only one of these, the Apostle emphasizes the unique majesty of the Mediator of redemption, who has delivered us, and who has been exalted to be our Lord. Him Paul had once seen on his way to Damascus in the brilliancy of His divine glory ; and he now knows that He is the image of the divine God, a First-born, in whom alone the full divine essence is reflected as in none of the creatures who have been made. For they all have only 16 been created in Him, because He was to be their Redeemer and their Lord. As the former is true of all that is upon earth, because all men stand in need of redemption, thus the latter is also true of everything that is in heaven, both the visible and the invisible. For there is indeed a kingdom of invisible heavenly spirits, ranged in different orders. But with whatever 17 names the new wisdom may designate these, it is nevertheless true of them all that they have been created through Him and for the purpose of being united with Him as their Head and their Lord. He

all things ¹consist. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; ²that in all things he might have the preëminence. (19) ³For it was the good pleasure of *the Father* that in him should all the fulness dwell; (20) and through him to reconcile all things ⁴unto ⁵himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross: through him, *I say*, whether things upon the

¹ That is, *hold together*. ² Or, *that among all he might have, &c.*
³ Or, *For the whole fulness of God was pleased to dwell in him.*
⁴ Or, *into him.* ⁵ Or, *him.*

alone has the absolute existence before all, and all things are indebted for the continuance of their existence to Him, since only in Him the attainment of the goal of the world appointed by God is guaranteed. For if there were no Redeemer for the world that has fallen into trespasses and sin, God could not permit the world
18 to continue its existence. But this high goal has already begun to be realized in the saved congregation, in which Christ is the Head of the body. For after He had upon earth completed the redemption, He has made the beginning in the resurrection, in which He as the first was born again to the heavenly life, in order in every respect to be the first in point of dignity. As He is now already the head of His congregation that is living upon the earth, so He is to become the head of the congregation that is born after Him for the heavenly life.
19 For with His exaltation that began with His resurrection, the entire fulness of the divine essence was pleased; concerning this the new wisdom was fond of speculating, and it could only be made manifest in the image of God, taking its abode in Him. But it also pleased God, through Him, the exalted One, to realize
20 the goal, for which He had intended this entire spiritual creation. Paul describes this as a reconciliation of all things, which He had accomplished, and which should lead to a union with Him. For through sin a rupture had taken place in the spiritual world that He had

COLOSSIANS

[I, 21-22]

earth, or things in the heavens. (21) And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, (22) yet now ¹hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh

¹ Some ancient authorities read *ye have been reconciled*.

created as one, and for Himself, since mankind was separated not only from God, but also from the angels, who in their purity were serving Him. But it could only be the good pleasure of God to repair this breach after He had Himself made peace with mankind, which had become hostile to Him through sin, by accepting the blood that Christ has shed upon the cross as a means of atonement, and thereby had removed all ground for enmity toward them. Now the exalted Christ could reconcile all things again unto a union with Himself, on the one hand, of the world that had been freed from sin, and, on the other hand, of the angel world that was free from sin, and to be the Head of whom He had been exalted by God after the completion of His work upon earth.

The Apostle states with emphasis that this blessed 21 goal had also been prepared for his readers. They, however, could best judge from their pre-Christian condition, how unworthy they were of this. For in their works, of which they knew only too well how evil they were, it not only appeared that they were estranged from God, for communion with whom they had been created, but a hostile state of mind toward Him was also apparent in them. But now they have again been reconciled with Him. The Apostle does not speak of that reconciliation which is later on to be effected through the exalted Christ, but of that which already during His life in the flesh He brought about 22 through His death, by having in connection with our deliverance from the guilt of sin, removed all ground for hostility on God's part against us. For only in this way had it been made possible, that they could also pre-

through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouvable before him: (23) if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the ⁷gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister.

(24) Now I rejoyce in my sufferings for your sake, and fill

¹ Gr. *good tidings*. See marginal note on ch. 1. 5.

serve the consecration of their hearts to God which had been given them in their baptism, and stand in after time without blemish and irreproachable before His countenance, when He returns in glory. Only then could He bring about that reconciliation which is to embrace them, together with the holy angels under Him, as the head of *one* blessed spiritual host. The attainment of this goal, as a matter of course, does not depend on them. But as one condition, the fulfilment

23 of which can be confidently expected, the Apostle can state that they shall abide in the faith concerning which he had before boasted in their case, because faith had been firmly established in them through the divine power operative in the gospel, and therefore made secure against all hesitancy. But he must add one thing more. For here it becomes perfectly clear that the attempt had been made to make them believe, that with this simple Christian faith it would not be possible to attain the goal of their hope. For they were not to permit themselves, by any such argument, to be separated from that hope, which the gospel had awakened in them, and of which they had heard that it had been proclaimed to all the world, and for the truth of which he was willing to take his stand, because he had been called to be a servant of the gospel, and certainly knew best what its contents were.

24 In order to secure a better hearing for his word of admonition, the Apostle explains how he had been in-

COLOSSIANS

[I, 25-26]

up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church ; (25) whereof I was made a minister, according to the ¹ dispensation of God which was given me to you-ward, to fulfil the word of God, (26) *even* the mystery which hath been hid ² for ages

¹ Or, *stewardship*. See 1 Cor. 9. 17.

² Or, *from all ages, &c.* Gr. *from the ages and from generations*.

duced to write this letter. At present it does not seem as though he had a special calling in their case, nor in that of any others ; for he is lying in chains in Cæsarea, in the residence city of the Roman Proconsul. But he rejoices in the very sufferings that he is enduring in his captivity, because he is enduring them for the benefit of the Christians from among the Gentiles, and hence also for his readers' sake ; for the hostility of the Jews, which was provoked by his work among the Gentiles, has succeeded in making him a Roman prisoner. There is indeed much yet lacking before he fulfills the measure of the sufferings of Christ, in the bearing of which together with Him he is to prove his discipleship ; but he ~~is~~ yet at the point of fulfilling this measure. And he gladly does this, not for the purpose of further supplementing something lacking in the work of Christ, but in order to return to Him in gratitude through whatever sufferings the flesh can endure, that which the Redeemer has suffered for him. It is true that this cannot accrue to His benefit, but it may accrue to the benefit of the congregation which is His body. To 25 serve the congregation is the mission that has been assigned to him by God, who dwells in the congregation as in His habitation, and therein has made this arrangement which He has entrusted to him to carry out, namely, that in them, who were formerly heathens, the word of divine promise is to be fulfilled. The new wisdom is speaking much and constantly about the divine mysteries which it claims it can reveal ; but the 26

and generations: but now hath it been manifested to his saints, (27) to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (28) whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all

true mystery of God is certainly this divine counsel of redemption, which remained hidden through the generations of past world ages. Even the prophets of the Old Testament had only hoped that the Gentiles would be able to attain to redemption when they should have become members of the people of Israel. But
27 now this mystery has been revealed to all who belong to God. They are to learn by experience through the work of the Apostle of the Gentiles, how great and rich the glory of this mystery is, since the divine redemptive plan was being realized in the Gentiles directly, because Christ has found a place among them. For now He gives to them also the hope of this heavenly glory, which Israel had long been expecting, but of
28 which they as yet had no idea. This Christ it is, whom and whom alone he and all the true messengers of the gospel are proclaiming, in contradiction to the teachers of the new wisdom, and are doing so to all men, both Jews and Gentiles. For they direct every man upon the right way to Him and they instruct every man concerning this, that redemption is to be found in Him; and this is the true wisdom which points out their goal and shows the direct way to it, and there is no other wisdom. Only through this wisdom can they lead every man to the goal, where as a matured man he himself is standing in the living communion with Christ. This is the genuine Christian perfection, which is the same for all men, and not the perfection to which their new wisdom would lead.

COLOSSIANS

[II, 1-2]

wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ ; (29) whereunto I labor also, striving according to his working, which worketh in me ¹ mightily.

II For I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh ; (2) that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the ² full assurance of understanding, that they may know the

¹ Or, *in power*.

² Or, *fulness*.

Towards this goal the Apostle is straining with all 29 his might amid constant struggles with all his enemies, who would force him away from it. This indeed he cannot do in his own power, but solely through the power of Him who already dwells and works powerfully in him in order to make him capable of this. He speaks 1 of his own severe struggle ; for he wishes to have them know, that this is said especially for their benefit and that of the neighboring congregation of Laodicea, because among the latter these have arisen also, who endanger their faith and their Christian life. But this is said also for the benefit of all whom he has not seen with his bodily eye, because they do not in a remembrance of his personal activity have a firm hold against the influence of these false teachers. The purpose of his struggle against 2 these people is to encourage their hearts, which were disturbed by a question as to whether they are in the right way to the consummation of redemption. But this can only take place if, as they are firmly united in love, they will also be united in the same way in reference to the certainty of their knowledge. For the chief concern is not the possession of a new treasury of knowledge, such as the new wisdom promises them, but the greatest possible riches in the full certainty of convictions concerning that of which they had already received the understanding, namely, the full knowledge of the mysteries of God, who, as the God of Christ, has re-

mystery of God, ¹ even Christ, (3) in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. (4) This I say, that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech. (5) For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. (6) As therefore ye received Christ

¹ The ancient authorities vary very much in the text of this passage.

vealed His redemptive counsel in Him, by realizing this counsel. In vain the teachers of the new wisdom boast concerning the secrets of the divine essence, which they
8 claim they can reveal; for in that divine mystery all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge that exist are contained. Of course these do not lie on the surface, but they must be sought for and be discovered; and for this end the Apostle is instructing the Colossians in this letter.

4 What the Apostle had said concerning his struggle in their behalf is only meant to warn them against the new wisdom, which with its flattering claims would deceive them into regarding itself as something higher than the redemptive counsel of God, which has been revealed
5 in Christ, and thus to mislead them. He does not say this because they have already been misled. For although absent in the body he yet is with them in his thoughts, and rejoices in seeing that harmony has not yet been disturbed by any schisms such as had occurred elsewhere already, and that their confidence that is placed upon Christ is firmly established. For this reason it is only necessary to admonish them that they are to make this Mediator of redemption, as they have learned to know Him in the proclamation concerning Jesus in His exaltation to be their divine Lord, to be also the foundation of their entire Christian
6 life. This life must be more and more deeply rooted in Him and be more and more richly built upon Him; every step forward in their way of living can come only

COLOSSIANS

[II, 7-10]

Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (7) rooted and builded up in him, and established ¹in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding ²in thanksgiving.

(8) ³Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the ⁴rudiments of the world, and not after Christ : (9) for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, (10) and in him ye are made full, who is the head of

¹ Or, *by*. ² Some ancient authorities insert *in it*.
³ Or, *See whether*. ⁴ Or, *elements*. See Gal. 4. 8 marg.

from the source in which it originated. But this can- 7
not be the case unless they constantly become firmer in
the faith in which they have been instructed ; and this
faith will become all the more unshaken in them, the
richer their gratitude becomes for those blessings of re- 8
demption, which they have already received. Thereupon
then the warning follows against those who would carry
them away as their prey, by making the Colossians the
adherents of their much lauded philosophy, which
nevertheless in its innermost kernel is pure deception.
That it is such is apparent from the fact that it is
based entirely upon human tradition, such as the pre-
Christian world possessed in the elements which con-
stituted, as it were, the alphabet of their religious knowl-
edge ; whereas all true knowledge must proceed from 9
Him, in whom the entire fulness of the divine essence
dwells and does so bodily. For He is not a heavenly
being concerning whom we can engage in empty spec-
ulations, but one of whom we know that here upon
earth He once walked in the body, and now being exalted
to heaven through the resurrection, continues to live 10
there in a glorified body as the complete image of God.
Moreover, since they by their living communion with
Him had gained participation in the fulness of the
divinity that dwelt in Him, they no longer need any sup-
plementing of any supposed deficiency in their Chris-
tianity. To supply this is the claim of the new teachers

all principality and power : (11) in whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ ; (12) having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who

through their doctrine regarding other heavenly beings, whereas He, to whom they are united in faith, is Himself the Head of all the other heavenly beings.

Furthermore, it was demanded of them that through circumcision, by means of which Israel became consecrated to God, they should consecrate their bodily life also so as to have communion with this heavenly world. But they are to know, that by the living communion with Christ they have acquired a much higher circumcision than that made with hands. Through the latter merely the uncleanness of the flesh is removed, but in the other circumcision they have discarded and laid aside the entire body, in so far as it belonged to their sinful nature, and served that. This circumcision Christ has performed on them, by having in their baptism transformed them into a living communion with Him. For as the burial of Christ sealed His death, so, too, by being submerged in the waters of baptism, it has been certified for them that by their communion with Christ their old sinful nature has forever been put aside. And as He was raised from death and ascended to heavenly life, so have they, too, risen with Him to a new life. For they have received their baptism in the faith upon Him, whom God has awakened from the dead. And this faith affords to them the assurance that this omnipotence of God, which in the case of Christ worked the miracle of His resurrection, has in them also produced a new life, however imperfect and rudimentary this life may at present be. The Apostle is in a position to confirm this

raised him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, *I say*, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; (14) having blotted out the ¹bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the

¹ Or, *the bond that was against us by its ordinances.*

by their personal experience as a Christians. Certainly 18 the sins of the past, when the uncleanness of their heathen life had not yet been cleansed through the circumcision in baptism, had brought them into a state of complete spiritual death. But the fact that God has in and with Christ given them a new life, this they experience in the fundamental gift of redemption that has been bestowed upon them in Christianity. For he, to whom God through grace has forgiven all those transgressions by which this condition of death was caused, so that these are no more counted against him as guilt, feels like one who has been born again unto life out of death. He knows that now he can and must begin something new.

Thoughtfully does the Apostle contemplate the great fact of redemption, upon which this fundamental Christian experience is based. There was one document 14 which testified against the Jews and the Gentiles and condemned them. This was the law, which announced the will of God which was binding upon everybody and charged them with having opposed this will. This document God has blotted out upon the cross of His Son, by accepting the death of Christ as a means of atonement. But this law through its enactment was at all times in antagonism to us, since its demands, which the natural man could not possibly meet, continually convicted us of new transgression. For this reason God has attached this law itself to the cross, i. e. has through the atoning death of His Son openly abrogated

cross ; (15) ¹ having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

(16) Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day :

¹ Or, *having put off from himself the.*

the law. The new order of grace, by which our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, has resulted in a fulfilment of His will achieved through grace in a different way from the fulfilment of the law's demand. It is the Spirit which has been given us in baptism that now urges us from within to fulfil the will of God, which we
15 cannot fulfil through our own power. It is true that there are superhuman powers, which would ever lead us into sin, by subjecting him who in the consciousness of his sins feels himself estranged from God to submit himself to their domination. But when the new teachers try to terrify them by pointing to the danger of again falling under the supremacy of these evil spirits, unless protected themselves against this by an abstinence demanded by human wisdom, they are to know, that God by His declaration that they are free from guilt has deprived and robbed these powers of the weapons by which they might again and again overpower us. Thus He has openly exposed them as conquered enemies. Through the cross on Mount Calvary, where He gave up His son to a death of atonement, He has triumphantly led them off captive, as those who can no longer do hurt to those whom He has redeemed. For by faith in the grace of God through Christ they renew the power to overcome all temptations to evil.
16 Since according to this the divinely wrought new life no longer requires any regulation by law and is no longer endangered by a power antagonistic to God, it follows, as a matter of course, that the giving of new statutes, which false teachers tried to persuade the

COLOSSIANS

[II, 17-18]

(17) which are a shadow of the things to come ; but the body is Christ's. (18) Let no man rob you of your prize ¹ by a voluntary humility and ² worshipping of the angels, ³ dwelling in the things which he hath ⁴ seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly

¹ Or, of his own mere will, by humility, &c.

² The Greek word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature, or to the Creator.

³ Or, taking his stand upon.

⁴ Many authorities, some ancient, insert not.

Colossians to accept, is mere folly. Through abstinence from the use of meat and of wine the bodily life is to be deprived of its sensuality ; through the observance of the festival occasions, which return regularly every week or every month or every year, everyday life is to receive a higher consecration. But they are not to concern themselves about this if they are condemned because in these respects they lack the true spirituality and consecration. For all such external commands, whether 17 they came from the law of God or from human tradition, are only a shadowy image of that which in the state of grace is to constitute true temperance and consecration of life. But the essence of the matter, which corresponds to it as the body does to its shadow, belongs to Christ, who alone has the right to determine in what way He is to be served by such things. For this reason no- 18 body is to persuade them, that they cannot with their simple Christian walk secure the crown of victory, which the Christian by his life is to gain for himself. This the new teachers try to do, by claiming, that the Colossians are lacking in true humility, which regards itself as entirely too insignificant to approach to God directly. For this reason they were advised to make themselves worthy of such communion with God through their adoration of the angels, in order that these might bring their prayers before the throne of God. When these teachers pretend to an acquaintance with the mysteries of the heavenly world, in order in this way to bring their adherents into contact with it, they

mind, (19) and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God.

(20) If ye died with Christ from the ¹rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, (21) Handle not, nor taste, nor touch

¹ Or, *elements*. See Gal. 4. 8 marg.

enter upon a department, which they claim had been opened to them through visions, although this claim in reality is nothing but baseless idle conceit, such as
19 originates in the natural man. For one thing they do not do, by which the humble Christian is distinguished, namely, they do not firmly cling to Him who is our Head, and that is Christ. The fact that it is possible for the congregation to attain to their perfection only in the living communion with Him, the Apostle illustrates by the growth of the natural body. As all the members of the body touch one another at the joints and by the nerves and the muscles are connected with the head, from which all the vital forces flow, so the congregation cannot grow, unless every member, being united with the others, utilizes the gifts and the powers he has received from Christ as his Head for the benefit of the entire communion. This growth, however, is not that promised by the new wisdom, but it is the growth demanded by God, and made possible only where all members remain in the most intimate union with Christ.
20 Through this living communion with Him they have all died in their baptism to their old nature and thereby have departed from all that belongs to the pre-Christian world together with its elementary wisdom, knowledge and purposes. Why do they submit to ordinances, which at best belong to this alphabet of all religions, as though they yet lived in that spirit which characterizes
21 the pre-Christian world? These demand with growing zeal unceasingly stringent abstinence from everything

(22) (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? (23) Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; *but are not of any* ¹ *value against the indulgence of the flesh.*

III If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. (2) Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. (8) For ye died, and

¹ Or, *honor.*

that sustains the life of sense because, according to their human commands and teachings, the transitoriness that belongs to this life, would be transferred to us too by 22 their use, and thereby cause our destruction. All such 28 commands and teachings have indeed the reputation of being wise, because they demand a voluntary and unreasonable adoration of God and a self-humility that goes beyond what duty claims, as also a refusal to spare the body. But they are not based on anything that is worthy of true honor and serve only to satisfy natural pride, which, on account of such self-selected abstinence, imagines that it is better than other persons.

If, then, the reader, through baptism, has been awak- 1 ened to a new life together with Christ, who in His post-resurrection life sits at the right hand of God, then their endeavors, too, are to be directed upward. Their heart and their mind are to be turned to that 2 which is above, not to that which belongs to the earth, such as ordinances concerning eating and drinking, working and leisure. Only a mind that is turned heavenward really does take us beyond the contrast between impure desire and unfruitful abstinence. In the death 8 which they have died unto Christ, all sensuality and earthly desires have ceased. Their true life is that which the exalted Christ lives, and they with Him. This is, indeed, for the present yet hidden in the coun-

your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, *who is*¹ our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

(5) Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth : fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry ; (6) for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God ² upon the sons of disobedience : (7) ³ where-

¹ Many ancient authorities read *your*.
upon the sons of disobedience. See Eph. 5. 6.

² Some ancient authorities omit
³ Or, amongst whom.

sel of God, who has given it to them in their resurrec-
4 tion with Christ through baptism. Only when Christ at His return has been made manifest, will they, too, become manifest with Him as that which they have been destined to be, and they will partake of the heavenly glory into which He already has entered.

5 The new teachers boast about their insistence on the destruction of our sensual nature. But the Apostle demands much more of the new life from those who are heavenly minded. They are themselves to put to death the members that are still upon the earth. These are, indeed, not the members of that body which is only yet serving their heavenly Lord, and which themselves already belong to heaven, but that which may yet be left of the members of the old body of sin that has been put to death in baptism, i. e. the remnant of their old heathen sins. Among these the Apostle names, as he always does, first of all, fornication and all kinds of unclean licentiousness, together with its fountain-head, namely, the passions and their impure
6 lusts, as also covetousness, which converts earthly pos-
sessions into gods. For just because of these very sins, which destroy sexual life and pervert the divinely intended relation of man to creation, comes the wrath of
7 God, upon the coming of which, on the great day of judgment, the preaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles was always based. They, too, at one time walked as did all the Gentiles, because, before they had died as to their

in ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things ; (8) but now do ye also put them all away : anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth : (9) lie not one to another ; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, (10) and have put on the new man, that is being renewed

old nature, they could not lead a life of righteousness. But now, since they have become Christians, and, in accordance with the demands of Christ, have died to these heathen sins, so that in all probability these will no longer be committed among them, it is necessary 8 that they, like all other Christians, shall lay aside what still adheres to them of their pre-Christian condition in the sin that is without love. As such the Apostle mentions anger and all other outbursts of wrath, and, indeed, every state of mind that seeks to injure another, and of sins of the tongue, slander, such as 9 every unkind word concerning a neighbor, and above all, words by which lies are told to another. For they certainly know that they have put off and discarded the old man with the manner of life pertaining thereto, and have also put in another man, who has been raised to life only through baptism. Because the 10 growth of this new life is being constantly influenced by the old sinful spirit, there must be a constant transformation into a completely new man. Whether such a change has already taken place, can be judged by comparing the life of the baptized with the pattern of Him who has created this new man, as He did originally the first man, after His own image. But as this image of God has been revealed to us only in Christ, we recognize this only, from the fact that we in each one see only Christ, with whom he is in the most intimate communion of life. Now all the distinctions of the pre-Christian life, such as nationality (Greek and Jew), or

unto knowledge after the image of him that created him : (11) where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman ; but Christ is all, and in all.

(12) Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering ; (13) forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any ; even as ¹ the Lord forgave you, so also do ye : (14) and above all these things

¹ Many ancient authorities read *Christ*.

11 religion (circumcision or uncircumcision), of culture (Barbarian even to the wildest Scythian), of social rank (slave and free), ceased since only Christ is now the all in everything that constitutes their essence.

12 In order to be thus completely renewed, they are to put on all Christian virtues, as is befitting them being the chosen of God, who are for this reason dedicated to God and beloved by Him. First of all is the heart full of mercy, and next is the compassion that gives aid to others, both of which virtues they had experienced in their election by God. From true humility comes gentleness ; for he who has received everything from the grace of God, knows that in himself he has nothing, and therefore will not regard any wrong that may be inflicted on him so seriously as thereby to permit himself to be provoked to wrath, but will rather bear it with long-suffering, even if he endures this

13 wrong permanently. They must bear one with the other, since each one knows that the other has also to bear with his own weaknesses. In case one has a charge against the other, such an one shall forgive the offender his fault. As God the Lord has forgiven them, they must now do likewise. But, above all this, they are to put on love, which is an ornament of their Christian life, in which we can in all cases first of all
14 recognize the garment of this new life. For it is

COLOSSIANS

[III, 15-16]

put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. (15) And let the peace of Christ ¹rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body ; and be ye thankful. (16) Let the word of ²Christ dwell in you ³richly ; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing ⁴one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.

¹ Gr. *arbitrate*. ² Some ancient authorities read *the Lord* : others, *God*.
³ Or, *richly in all wisdom ; teaching, &c.* ⁴ Or, *yourselves*.

through this love that true perfection (in contrast to that for which the new wisdom was striving) is held together, so that none of these Christian virtues are lost, because love produces them all as a matter of necessity. Then that peace of soul which has been pro- 15
duced by Christ through His work of deliverance, gives them the crown of victory, which the new teachers would deny that they possess, i. e. makes their hearts certain that, if they abide in this love, they shall not forfeit the consummation of their redemption. For by their baptism they have been called to the possession of this peace, and that, too, in one body, i. e. in their union as fellow-members with all the believers, which union is preserved by this love. It would be ingratitude if, in the enjoyment of this peace of soul, they should permit themselves to be disturbed or weakened by any unjustifiable demands, instead of rejoicing over it with gratitude. In this gratitude the Apostle sees the crown of Christian life. Such gratitude is at all times 16
to be excited among them by the fact, that they make the word of Christ, which proclaims the redemption that has been given through Him, the constant and regular object of their preaching among themselves. To this may be added the consideration that there will be no lack of those who in all wisdom instruct them concerning the contents of this redemption, and admonish them to appropriate it rightly. For this purpose it is necessary that self-exhortation must be

(17) And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

(18) Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. (19) Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. (20) Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. (21) Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged. (22) ¹ Servants, obey in all things them that are your ² masters according

¹ Gr. *Bondservants*.

² Gr. *lords*.

added to such gratitude. The redemption that has been proclaimed in the word of Christ, and which has been appropriated by faith, must be celebrated in all kinds of songs, such as the Holy Ghost inspires. They must sing to the praise of God in their hearts on account of the grace they have experienced in Christ. But they are also to bring their thanksgiving to God
 17 for everything that they accomplish in word or deed, doing this all in the name, i. e. at the command of the Lord Jesus. For in all that they do at His command, they render thanks to God as their Father in Christ through Him, who has thus taught them to glorify God through their whole lives. How this can take place in the simplest natural relation of life, without any self-chosen exercises of piety, is seen in the following table of duties.

18 In the living communion with Christ it is pre-emi-
 21 nently proper, because it is pleasing to Him, to fulfil all natural duties, such as the subordination of the wife to the husband and the unconditional obedience of the children to the parents. For this reason husbands are to love their wives and are not to permit themselves to be embittered against them by their natural weaknesses. Fathers are not to provoke their children by
 22 harshness and injustice, lest these should lose courage. The Apostle speaks most concerning slaves, whose

COLOSSIANS

[IV, 1

to the flesh ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord : (23) whatsoever ye do, work ¹ heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men ; (24) knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance : ye serve the Lord Christ. (25) For he that doeth wrong shall ² receive again for the wrong that he hath **IV** done : and there is no respect of persons. (1) ³ Masters, render unto your ⁴ servants that which is just and ⁵ equal ; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

¹ Gr. *from the soul.*

² Gr. *receive again the wrong.*

³ Gr. *lords.*

⁴ Gr. *bondservants.*

⁵ Gr. *equality.*

social condition made it hardest for them to fulfil this duty. They too are to render absolute obedience to the masters to whom in the natural relation of their lives they are enslaved, and are to do this not for the purpose of gaining their personal favor, as those do for whom it is only a matter of importance to please men, but they are to do this in the simplicity of their hearts, which seeks to do only one thing, namely that which duty demands. If they do this, not out of fear of their earthly masters, but out of fear of their exalted Lord, then all that degrades and humiliates in slavery ceases to exist. For they are all to do their **23** work, not by compulsion but from the bottom of their **24** hearts, since they do it not to serve men but the Lord, of whom they know that they will sometime receive as a recompense for this the heavenly inheritance which has been prepared for them. They are to render their slave service to the heavenly Lord and Mediator of redemp- **25** tion ; for He who will not judge the Christian slave otherwise than He does the non-Christian, and before whose eyes there is no regard of person, will surely punish all wrong that has been done by failure in the fulfilment of duty, so that they will receive exactly what they have earned. The masters, too, must avoid all arbi- **1** trary exercise of authority. They are not only to permit their slaves everything that is proper and right,

(2) Continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving ; (3) withal praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds ; (4) that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. (5) Walk in wisdom toward

but also put them on a perfect equality with themselves in the consciousness that they themselves, like the slaves, have a Master in heaven and they accordingly can do to the slaves only what He demands and will repay.

- 2 In conclusion the Apostle sums up everything in the exhortation, that they are to continue in prayer, at the same time giving directions how their watchfulness, i. e. the activity of the mind that makes every feeling of lassitude impossible, will be preserved. For only gratitude for what has been received urges on to a continued
- 8 praying for the purpose of receiving more. But their prayer is at all times to be a prayer for him also and for all who proclaim the Gospel, so that God may open the door for their word, i. e. give constantly a richer opportunity for the preaching of this word. The Apostle assigns as a reason for this that there is nothing less at stake than speaking the promulgation of the mystery of the divine redemptive counsel, which certainly must be a matter of importance, since he has been put in fetters on its account. For this reason
- 4 the petition for him must especially include a prayer that he may be able to proclaim this word as his calling to speak demands, i. e. may preach it still more among the Gentiles, who have not yet heard it. For this, as a matter of course, his deliverance from present cap-
- 5 tivity would be necessary. But they have also the duty of proving themselves a blessing to those who are without, i. e. non-Christians. For this it is necessary that they deal with them in the right wisdom, which

COLOSSIANS

[IV, 6-9]

them that are without, ¹redeeming the time. (6) Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one.

(7) All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord ; (8) whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts ; (9) together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that *are done* here.

¹ Gr. *buying up the opportunity*.

avoids all offense and makes use of every opportunity 6 to gain them. Wherefore in their speaking at all times, even if the attitude of the unbelievers makes this difficult, they should utter their message in a pleasing form, seasoned as with salt, whereby foods are made palatable. Then shall they know how they can render answer to every one if he asks about what their new faith is.

The close of the Epistle begins with Paul's commen- 7 dation, to the Colossians, of Tychicus, who is bringing this letter, and who is also to report orally concerning him. He calls him his beloved brother, who at the same time is a faithful servant and co-laborer in the Lord. For the service which he has rendered him, i. e. by this journey to Colossæ, he has rendered to the cause of 8 Christ, whose servant he is, as is Paul himself. He has sent him to the Colossians because these were disturbed about his captivity, and in order that through his reports concerning the Apostle and his associates, (thinking probably in this connection of their teacher Epaphras, and of his captivity), he might allay their anxieties. 9 With him goes Onesimus, whom he also commends to them as a faithful and beloved brother, and whom he calls their fellow-countryman. We learn further particulars about him in the letter to Philemon. Both these men, he says, will be able to inform them fully as

(10) Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments ; if he come unto you, receive him), (11) and Jesus that is called Justus, who are of the circumcision : these only are *my* fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me. (12) Epaphras, who is one of you, a ¹ servant of Christ Jesus, saluteth you, always striving for you

¹ Gr. *bondservant*.

- 10 to what has happened in Cæsarea. Then follow greetings from those about Paul. First Aristarchus, who voluntarily shares his captivity, and is at all times at hand to serve him. Greetings from Mark follow. He was the son of the sister of Barnabas, who for some time had accompanied the latter and Paul on their mission journey and now was at the point of starting for Colossæ. Paul recommends them to receive him in a friendly manner ; Tychicus will already have communicated to them full instructions concerning him.
- 11 In regard to him and Jesus Justus, from whom he also sends greetings, Paul says, that they were the only Christians from among the Jews in his company, who assisted him in working for the kingdom of God. Evidently the others kept themselves in the background, in order not to be involved in the trial of their countryman. Nevertheless he declares of these, too, that they had been a source of consolation to him in his deplorable condition.
- 12 In particular, he sends greetings from their countryman Epaphras, whom he again describes as a servant of Christ, because he was not content with mere good wishes in their behalf, but at all times wrestles in prayer for them in order that his work among them may prosper. For this reason he constantly prays, that they may stand fast in the true Christian perfection and in the full certainty of their conviction concerning every will of God, which would not permit them to be taken by the new wisdom, as though they

COLOSSIANS

[IV, 18-17]

in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. (13) For I bear him witness, that he hath much labor for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis. (14) Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you. (15) Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and ¹Nymphas, and the church that is in ²their house. (16) And when ³this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea. (17) And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

¹ The Greek may represent *Nympha*.

² Some ancient authorities read *her*.

³ Gr. *the*.

yet lacked of knowledge in this or in that matter, that was necessary for the attainment of their highest perfection. The Apostle gives him the testimony, that his anxiety had been great in his efforts for them and for the Christians in the two neighboring cities. Finally he sends greetings from the physician Luke, whom Paul had learned to love so dearly, since he took him along on his mission journey to Europe, and from Demas. Through the Colossians Paul sends greetings to the brethren at Laodicea, and especially to Nymphas, who held services in his house for the narrower circle of the members of the congregation, for which reason he adds also greetings for these. He instructs the Colossians to see to this, that as soon as this letter has been read in their congregational meeting, it is to be sent to Laodicea and to be read in the congregation there also. Then that letter too, which he had already, and evidently on account of the same dangers, sent to Laodicea, and which has unfortunately been lost for us, is to be sent from there to them and to be read in the Colossian congregation also. He gives them special directions with regard to Archippus, who had probably taken the place of Epaphras during the latter's absence. He is to take good care that he render fully the service which he

(18) The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

18 has assumed in the name of Christ. The Apostle, as he was accustomed to do, adds with his own hand the greeting with which the letter closes, after having dictated all that precedes it probably to Aristarchus. He begs of them to remember his chains in their prayers and prays that the grace of God may accompany them.







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